

THE PROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

No. XVII.

ART. I.—UNIVERSITY REFORM.

1. *Report of the Syndicate to the Vice-Chancellor, Cambridge*, April 8th, 1848.
2. *Suggestions for an Improvement of the Examination Statute*. Oxford: Macpherson. 1848.
3. *University Reform, &c.* By John S. Blackie, Professor of Humanity in Marischal College, Aberdeen. Edinburgh: Sutherland and Knox. 1848.
4. *London University Calendar*, 1848.

IN a wholesome state of things, the improvement of Corporations (as of Individuals) is so continuous as to be little observed; and though in the course of generations there is a *re-formation*, no one thinks of calling it Reform. When however a system is mechanized which has very feeble vitality, and lingers on beyond the age to which it is adapted, any general awakening of mind in the nation will cause an outcry for extensive changes. In ascribing "feeble vitality" to our Universities, we of course do not mean that it would be easy to destroy them: most tenacious are they of vegetative and material life. The living power in which they are deficient, is that of internal reconstruction and adaptation to new circumstances; and the reason of this deficiency is on the surface,—namely, that their constitution was enacted expressly to perpetuate the plans of those who framed it, and reduce to its minimum the discretionary authority of each new generation. Long possession has armed them

against power from without ; long habit has stiffened them against reason and argument from within. In spite of all these difficulties in the way of change, so deplorably disgraceful had the state of Cambridge, and peculiarly of Oxford, become in the last century, that by the exertions of a few energetic men a signal reconstruction of the studies in each place was made ; and to the greatness of the improvement and importance of the precedent, we must in great measure impute the fact, that they continue successfully to evade the interposition of the public legislature.

A list of all the motions made in Parliament this century for (more or less detailed) reform in the Scotch and English Universities would be a curiosity. How many folio pages of blue books concerning the Scotch Universities slumber harmlessly in the dust of official shelves or in the libraries of M.P.s !—harmlessly, to all but the taxpayers. It seems to be the fate of parliamentary motions on these subjects, to act (at most) only as a goad upon the Universities, quickening their voluntary action. Sometimes, on the contrary, they are roused to vehement self-defence, as by Mr. G. W. Wood's motion to admit Dissenters to degrees ; and pure mischief is done. The Grey ministry, as individuals, supported Mr. Wood's motion, but not as a Government. They bared their teeth, but showed that they did not dare to bite ; and aided to throw back University Reform for at least fifteen years.

Since that time, Dissenters have established various colleges of their own, with religious tests for admission : and however they may explain this to their own satisfaction, it has effectually stopped their mouths against demanding that such tests shall be removed in the old Universities. They have themselves strengthened the mouldering walls on the side, on which alone ordinary statesmen judged that a breach might be made. For a Reformed Parliament to claim for all orders of men equal admission into public institutions, appeared natural, and almost an obvious duty ; but for any English Parliament to discuss an abstract moral question,—such as, the evil tendency of religious tests upon Churchmen,—or a question that involves general intelligence, and cannot be decided by parliamentary figures,—as, whether the Studies

of the Universities are as comprehensive and as fruitful as they might be,—this was a thing much harder to expect; and perhaps would have been hopeless had not Oxford and Cambridge themselves lost character with the nation, more rapidly than ever before in the same length of time. At Oxford especially a series of scandals have been exhibited. One Professor of Divinity solemnly denounced from St. Mary's pulpit the new Popery which was pervading the Colleges: another Professor of Divinity was himself attacked and censured in Convocation, and shorn of his public rights, on an undefined yet well understood imputation of heresy. A Fellow and Tutor of a College was arraigned at the same tribunal and degraded for publishing a book which maintained that a man might hold full Romanism while subscribing the thirty-nine articles; and although the fact imputed was notorious and undenied, a surprisingly large number of Fellows, Tutors, and Masters of Arts, deprecated all proceedings against him. This was followed, not long after, by numerous secessions to Rome. For more than a dozen years the appropriate studies of the place had languished, all heart being eaten out of them by the new zeal for the Fathers, and by theological speculations, which (right or wrong) were sanctioned neither by Church nor by State. Men of plain common sense could now see that the Tests were useless for good, and active for evil; that there was a serious mischief from the absence of a continuous and authorized system of effective theological learning, and from the inability of the public Professors to enforce the just claims of their several studies: and while these perceptions were fresh in the public mind, if a minister of the crown had moved judiciously towards University Reform, a very feeble opposition might have been encountered.

The Academicians—of Cambridge at least—have well understood the change in national and parliamentary feeling. Dissenters are no longer feared: Churchmen no longer rally indiscriminately to uphold whatever exists, in fear lest otherwise nothing may long exist; and no one could foresee the effect of a very moderate Parliamentary interference. A modest address to the Prime Minister was prepared by one of the members for North Lancashire, representing that the Universities are not as efficient for

scientific purposes as they might be, and that their connection with the Colleges so impedes internal reform, as to call for aid from the supreme power of the State. Scarcely had this received fifty signatures, when proposals for self-reform commenced in Cambridge; and collegians who had intended to sign the petition were dissuaded by the argument that it was indecent to seek help from without, until it appeared what would be the result of the internal movement. To our agreeable surprise, an important step has indeed been made, and with a facility which strikingly shows how superior are the organic arrangements of Cambridge to those of Oxford. The Report of the Syndicate (or Committee?), recommending certain extensions of the University Examinations, was passed by so decisive majorities, as to give no small guarantee that it will not remain a dead letter, but that the principles involved in the new statute will be honestly worked out. And here they are the principles, not the details, that are of importance.

All who have any near acquaintance with the internal state of Oxford and Cambridge are aware that the resident undergraduates are popularly divided into *reading* and *non-reading* men; and, whatever may once have been the case, this distinction is by no means equivalent to that of clever men and dunces, or even industrious and idle; but under non-reading men are included all those who have no taste for those particular studies which alone are recognised in the public examinations. These are roughly called, Mathematics and Classics. But the Classical "Tripos" of Cambridge affects only those who are likely to distinguish themselves highly, and is inaccessible to the majority; moreover, the questions are there far narrower than at Oxford, since they turn solely upon language, and do not exact acquaintance with the contents of any particular books. Whether this is on the whole for the better or for the worse, it is not here our purpose to inquire; but, as a fact, this circumstance still further limits the number of minds which will take interest in such studies. The universal and necessary examination for the Bachelor's Degree at Cambridge is concerned with Mathematics: indeed, to get *some* honour in Mathematics is made prerequisite to those who aspire to the Classical "Tripos." It is notorious that in no talent at all is there greater disparity among

youthful minds, than in the mathematical. Some youths see from end to end of Euclid without aid, and without conscious effort; others, of undoubted capacity in other directions, grope and stumble about deplorably; and a teacher's great difficulty is to find out where their difficulty lies. Considering the importance of the reasoning faculties, and the aptitude of youth for pure argument, in which no judgment and experience is required, we do not question the propriety of making *some* demonstrative science an essential part of University study. But to propose the mere elements of Mathematics (and more cannot possibly be extracted from the majority) as the beginning and end of the academical career, is beggarly in truth; and such a system will necessarily devote the mass to apathy and indolence, as far as the influence of the public Schools can do so. If demonstrative science must needs be so anxiously enforced, Political Economy might beneficially be included with Mathematics; for this study, besides the pure reasoning, exercises the mind in the discrimination of doubtful terms and in the hunt after facts, both of which things are of first-rate importance in actual life and are not cultivated at all in mere mathematics. To this must be added, that the science itself is of eminent value to all classes in England. But in fact, it is only one out of many studies which modern genius has raised to such a pitch of excellence, that to neglect them at our Universities is indefensible. The comprehensive aims of the corresponding German institutions may here rebuke and enlighten us.

Oxford indeed does not fall into the Cambridge error of overvaluing mathematics and the exact physical sciences. On the contrary, though these are recognized in her Examination Schools, they are effectually discouraged in that university by the general want of sympathy with them and by the extreme rarity of the cases in which the College Fellowships are awarded to mathematical eminence. The Classical career at Oxford is, though capricious and strange in some respects, yet on the whole ample and generous. The youth who presents himself raw from school as a competitor for a scholarship, is expected to write correct Latin and Greek prose, elegant Latin Hexameters, Pentameters and Alcaics, as well as Greek Iambics: yet the more matured student, when examined for his Bachelor's degree

or for a Fellowship, lays aside "verses" as puerile. Demosthenes and Cicero are almost entirely neglected; Plato is read *ad libitum*; Greek and Latin History is studied with a painful and useless accuracy within certain limits, but is utterly ignored beyond those limits: three or four treatises of Aristotle are elaborated with slavish anxiety, while the rest are never opened. Undoubtedly some limits must be set for each man,—tutor or pupil; but they need not be the same for all: such a restriction condemns a great University to the same one-sidedness as an individual. Why should everybody who is to receive marks of distinction, study *ad nauseam* a single very defective and very erroneous treatise on Morals? three books of Rhetoric, two of which contain tons of trash? a tract on Poetics, which is formed by induction from such specimens of poetry as alone were found in a single national literature? Allowing however that Greek is to carry everything before it, are not the Attic orators, whose power is ever living, and whose words let us into the bosom of Grecian families and states, at least as worthy of study as a bye-gone and superseded philosophy? These and other not inconsiderable objections may be made to the Oxford *curriculum*. Nevertheless, it has an amplitude of its own. It includes, not mere language as language, but poetry, history and philosophy as such: it exercises many powers of mind; and appears to us very preferable to the mere Mathematics or restricted Philology of Cambridge.

Strange however as it may seem, the advances of the Public Schools in the country at large have been a harm to Oxford in the last twenty years. In a flexible and living system the two parts of juvenile training would grow together, and the improvement of the earlier process would aid the later to attain higher perfection; but with a rigid inanimate mechanism, the Schools are in danger of forestalling and superseding the University. Full twenty-five years ago Shrewsbury School had become celebrated for accurate training of young scholars in Latin and especially in Greek composition; some years later, Arnold at Rugby began to cultivate Thucydides, and to teach his boys to penetrate into the substance of the author and read with manly intellect. The "Scholarship" established by Dean Ireland in 1825 for accurate knowledge of Latin

and Greek was thenceforth severely contested by the different Public Schools; and the continual accession of new and abler masters to those Schools has trained their best pupils to such a pitch, that, (we are assured on first-rate authority,) whenever an Oxford scholarship is thrown open to general competition, two or even three candidates are certain to be found, who write off Greek Iambics with accuracy and elegance, and altogether display such a mastery of the Greek language as not one first-classman in ten can be imagined to have possessed thirty years ago. Now how is this skill obtained? Not without a very extensive study of the Greek Tragedians. In short, *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, *Thucydides*, *Demosthenes*, and even to a certain extent *Aristotle*, are now read at the Public Schools; and all the foremost minds are so well versed in the current University books at the age of nineteen, that they sicken, when at Oxford the same old dish is set before them anew. If they were allowed at once to pass their classical examination, they would be ready for other studies beyond: Oxford, as well as Germany, might then have in abundance Hebrew, Arabic, Sanscrit, Zend or Gothic scholars,—to say nothing here of other sciences. It is the more remarkable, that with all this precocity in Greek, Latin scholarship is notoriously defective at Oxford. Many Eton youths have fine taste and skill in Latin versification, who yet cannot write good prose; and,—since there is little encouragement to extensive and accurate reading in *Cicero*, *Livy*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny*, *Quintilian*,—nothing weighs more heavily on clever young men than the necessity of keeping up for three or four years at Oxford the power of composing Latin;—to be abandoned probably and forgotten as soon as a Fellowship is obtained. The general system works pretty well for those of second-rate talent; but it is seldom indeed that the College Tutor can satisfy his ablest pupils. He is generally young himself; he has to teach a great many things; he does not expect to stay long in his position, since he will vacate it by marriage: on the contrary, the Masters at the Public Schools in the country are men in the prime of their understanding, often superior to the College Tutors. Thus it is no rare thing for the youth who passes from School to the University to find that he has fallen beneath a less able in-

structor: and if his ripeness of mind was such as to enable him to appreciate his school-teacher, he is grievously discouraged; and he either becomes apathetic and indolent, or engages himself in something else than the recognised studies of the place.

We are satisfied that no reforms can really be adequate, can really deserve to be much rejoiced in, which do not at once open new subjects of study, and provide mature and able minds to teach them. At the Universities themselves a certain consciousness pervades the younger Masters,—Tutors and Fellows,—that their relation to the Public Professors is essentially unsound. The Professors are the elder and the more permanent element in the Universities, and are at present reduced to ciphers by the collegiate and tutorial system. To remove this anomaly—to use both Tutor and Professor, each in his own place—this is the great problem for all University reformers. If the youths who, on first entering, are beyond the Tutorial lectures, were at liberty to attend on the Professors,—if some modification of the system added a new impetus to Professorial exertion,—there is no reason why Oxford and Cambridge might not become centres in which all the highest knowledge of the age is accessible. To aim at any thing short of this is probably to labour in vain; for nothing short of this stimulates the imagination and zeal of ambitious youth.

The Cambridge Statute of Reform erects two new Triposes,—for *Moral Sciences* (viz. Moral Philosophy, Political Economy, Modern History, General Jurisprudence, and the Laws of England); and for *Natural Sciences* (viz. Anatomy, Comparative Anatomy, Physiology, Chemistry, Botany, Geology): in each, the Examiners will be Public Professors or their Deputies, with one additional Examiner, approved by the Vice-Chancellor and Senate; moreover, the candidates deemed worthy of honour will be ordinarily arranged in three classes, with liberty to the Examiners of pointing out any who display eminent proficiency. The Statute further creates a *Board of Mathematical Studies*, to which the Mathematical Professors will belong, as well as the Public Examiners of every year and of the two preceding years. It will be their duty to report every year to the Vice-Chancellor on the state of

mathematical study in the University, which report will be published in the Easter Term. All this tends to bring forward the Professors into public importance: but as the two Triposes are entered voluntarily, they impose nothing on the many who love to be idle and are satisfied with a "common" degree. To meet this case, all students "who, being candidates for the degree of B.A., or for the honorary degree of M.A., are *not* candidates for honours," must, before entering the B.A. examination, bring a certificate from at least one of thirteen Public Professors,* that he has attended his lectures *for one term*, and has passed a satisfactory examination. "One term" is, indeed, a short period; but in recognising an Examination by the Professor, it admits a principle, and will probably grow up into importance. Probably *more* could not have been brought in at once; and the Professors themselves might have been embarrassed by too sudden a change in their position. Very similar regulations apply to candidates for the degree of B.C.L.; but in respect to Theology, we only read:

"The Syndicate, having respect to the great importance of the study of Theology, and with the view of giving increased efficiency to the regulations already established for the promotion of it, further recommend, that all persons who present themselves at the Theological Examination established May 11, 1842, be required to produce a certificate *of having attended the lectures* delivered during one term at least by two of the three Theological Professors."

We are incompetent to judge how the last regulation will act; but it certainly is quite insufficient to redeem Theology from neglect. Where, moreover, is Hebrew placed? Where Arabic? But we refrain. Various other changes will, we apprehend, be called for one by one; for it is next to impossible that the new system should work smooth and perfect at once: and we have hopes that the gradual improvements which will be demanded by the Professors year by year will effectually banish, at Cambridge, that dread of innovation which has kept our Universities back. A large range indeed of Science is now recognised as entitled to University honours; and in due

* These are the Professors of Laws, Physic, Moral Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, Modern History, Botany, Geology, Experimental Philosophy, Laws of England, Medicine, Mineralogy, Political Economy.

time we must expect to see many Fellowships bestowed on merit in these new branches. Here perhaps will be the greatest struggle, and how early it will have a prosperous issue must depend on very many circumstances. We may however congratulate Cambridge on having began a new career. The beginning may be feeble, yet it contains the promise of much. It gives us to hope that the intercourse between that University and the great world without is too active to allow it any longer to hold back in the course of improvement; and if Cambridge moves steadily on, Oxford will not now lag behind so long as she did in her first great reform.

The same address to Lord John Russell which we regard as having quickened the movements of the Cantabrigians, is manifestly alluded to in the Oxford tract called "Suggestions for the improvement of the Examination Statute;" and affords there an argument for internal University Reform. We further learn from it, that a memorial had just been presented to the Heads of Houses, praying for a change in the Examination Statute, and signed by forty-five of the Collegiate Tutors. Several of the Memorialists concurred in composing or revising the pamphlet before us; so that we may regard it as a manifesto from the advanced guard of the Oxford reformers. The substance of the Memorial is to pray for *three* instead of *two* Examinations; namely, a *first* at an early period,—so as to serve in part for an Entrance Examination, without acting quite so severely against ill-prepared students; a *second*, for that portion of classics which is required in the B.A. degree; a *third*, for higher science. We may conceive these three to terminate the first, second and third year of residence, the B.A. degree being taken after the third. The practical effect would be, that the third year would be given up by students to the lectures of Public Professors, and it would not be compulsory to continue classical studies during the third year. Since nothing is yet settled, it is needless here to state any details of the scheme; indeed, report says that it is already too liberal a change to please the Heads, while to us it appears inadequate except as a beginning. In both Universities we might have expected the chief opposition to come from the Private Tutors, who would apparently be much embarrassed by any considerable change

in the public course of study : but—whether from their generosity, or because there is little danger that the change can be rapid—there are no signs of their opposition. At Oxford, the chief obstacle seems to lie in the inactivity and age of the Heads of Houses, to whom by a mischievous exertion of power Archbishop Laud secured the sole right to originate legislation in the University : nor is there any greater cause of stagnation to Oxford. It will be perceived however that the Memorialists are aiming at an important object which the Cantabrigians have overlooked ; —viz., bringing on the present B.A. examination at an earlier period, so as to reserve time after it for other studies : and to lessen the accumulation of diverse topics, which so oppress the brain of ambitious aspirants. Unless the *common* B.A. studies at Cambridge be kept very low, they will interfere with the efficiency of the new Honour “Triposes.” Perhaps the reply is,—that they *are* kept low, and are meant to be so ; but in that case, it is preposterous to delay the examination so late. But while we recognise the good sense of the Oxford Memorialists in their otherwise less ambitious scheme, we have been too often disappointed in expectations from Oxford to believe that anything good is carried, until we see it in operation. One thing only is hopeful : people there are beginning to look reform in the face with less alarm. A very short time ago, a statute proposed by the Master of Pembroke could find no favour whatever : yet the Heads themselves are already contemplating without decided aversion measures that go beyond his.

We pass, by a great leap, from England to Scotland. Very different are the evils of which Professor Blackie complains. Addressing Professor Pillans, he remarks : “The venerable institution on the banks of the Isis has by a double usurpation of a most remarkable kind caused the Tutors to supersede the Professors, and the Arts and Sciences to yield the ground to mere Latin and Greek. The more modern academies to which you and I belong have by a double degradation sunk the Greek and Latin classes into mere schools, and the Greek and Latin Professors into mere schoolmasters.” The cause of this is found in the low age or unprepared state of the pupils, who consist partly of schoolboys aged fourteen and fifteen,

partly of "untrained clowns" of nineteen years or upwards. No cure can be found except from an efficient Entrance Examination; but as the interest of each Professor is opposed to rejection of candidates, no strictness is possible until the admission is entrusted to other hands. Professor Blackie wishes that no one should enter the University who cannot, 1. translate into English any ordinary passage of Livy and of the Four Gospels wherever opened, with a sound knowledge of the grammar of both languages; 2. translate into Latin without any gross blunder an ordinary passage of narrative English; 3. show a knowledge of the outlines of Greek and Roman history and geography; 4. and of Latin prosody and versification.—If such an examination were energetically enforced, an immediate improvement would take place in the schools, into which the less competent students would be thrown back. In fact the schools, which now lose their pupils at fourteen, would keep them till sixteen or seventeen, and the quality of University instruction would immediately rise.

The Reform which Professor Blackie is seeking to bring about is certainly a very difficult one; because, in a rather poor country it proposes a large pecuniary loss to the University Professors. We fear that this is less hopeful than even Oxford reform, and there is only one way in which we can imagine it to be brought about:—namely, if the strong good sense of the Professors at one or a second University should lead them to resolve to be nothing but a High School. At Aberdeen and St. Andrew's for instance, if an organization were introduced similar to that of Harrow or Westminster, and pupils at the age of seventeen were recommended to pass one year at Edinburgh or Glasgow under the Professors, with an understanding that an Entrance Examination should be enforced in Edinburgh and Glasgow, which would aid to throw back less competent pupils on Aberdeen or St. Andrew's,—Scotland would thus convert some of her superfluous Universities into Public Schools, and make the remaining Universities far more efficient. But until we possess a Minister of Public Education it is utopian to hope for anything of the sort. Such a Minister would afford a central point of intercourse to the different Scotch Universities: he might report to Parliament on the desirableness of partially en-

dowing some of the chairs, if that would facilitate any useful arrangements: in short, matters would not be left as now to mere haphazard.

But why do we talk of a Minister of Education in Scotland, when in England that University which the Ministry took into its own hands is, as suddenly, abandoned, and needs reform already as much as the Scotch Universities? The very evil at which Professor Blackie points, exists also in the London University and its affiliated Colleges, in spite of a pretended Entrance Examination. These Colleges are vexed with mere school-work, and the Professors are lowered into School-teachers, as truly as in Scotland: and for the same reasons. The "Matriculation Examination" of the London University goes for nothing with the Colleges;—necessarily, as long as they remain without influence over it. The relation between University and Colleges is the very antipodes of Oxford and Cambridge. *There* the Colleges have indeed domineered over the University, yet at any rate the result is an organic whole. *Here*, the two systems are so isolated, that separation is at any moment possible, and the relation is rather that of doubtful alliance than of vital union. But lately, the Roman Catholic Colleges threatened to secede, if a certain motion had been carried in the Senate with reference to examination in the Greek Gospels. In University College, it is reported that some of the Professors have been known on principle to advise their pupils against taking London degrees; and King's College pupils very frequently go to Cambridge in preference. This in itself indicates how King's College is depressed into a preparatory school, though in part by causes over which London University has no control. As however the Colleges have risen independently, they will not consent to exclude pupils from their classes, in obedience to the command of the University: they must first be invested with some control over the Examination. While this is urgently needed with reference to Matriculation, it is likewise much to be desired for the Bachelor's degree; inasmuch as the Senate of the University and some of their most important Examiners consist of persons who are not occupied in teaching. Lord Monteagle and other Cambridge men might have been expected from the first to

see that the Colleges ought *to be represented* in the University. In what way, we do not venture to lay down; but it seems to us clear that the ruling body should consist of *variable members, partly elected by the Colleges, partly nominated by the Ministry of the day*; and that the Matriculation Examination should be prerequisite for entering the College classes. At present, the London system seems likely to become more rigid and dead even than that of Oxford; for the Senate consists of persons, eminent perhaps each in his own art, but having too little in common; and as they are appointed for life, are responsible to no one, come into no contact with the Colleges, and are not personally affected by any errors into which they may fall, they are likely to preserve for ever what they once determine on. The regulations may be too severe, the examinations may be injudicious, but how is the Senate to find it out? None but the immediate examiners are behind the scenes. Even if many failures of students are reported, if their scholarships are not gained, who shall tell whether it is through the inadequacy of the collegiate teaching or through the severity or eccentricity of examiners? At Oxford and Cambridge four new examiners, we believe, enter office every year, and these, persons fresh from college teaching: indeed the *viva voce* system in the former University puts every examiner on his own trial, and in many ways is valuable. But this last advantage must of course be sacrificed, if competition is to play so very prominent a part as in Cambridge and London; and the question is too large to be more than glanced at here. At present let it suffice to remark that a London examiner has no means whatever of guessing what sort of lectures the pupils have been attending. As this is inevitable, means should be used to elicit from themselves what they do know, and all curious questioning is inopportune. This is no place for suggesting improvements of that nature; but we must say that there is an obvious deficiency in organs of communication between the Colleges and University, which it concerns the Queen's Ministry to supply.

To return to Professor Blackie's subject. We cannot pursue in detail his lively exposures of the lamentable defects in the Scotch system; although his remarks on

the *two* Universities (!) at Aberdeen might tempt us to quotation. But how striking an illustration we here have of the truth of that saying, that a Parliamentary Commission is often the most quiet way of consigning to forgetfulness an important subject. Catholic Emancipation, Parliamentary Reform, and other great measures, utterly eclipsed a concern so insignificant as Scotch University Education; and things still remain *in statu quo*, after a blue book which seemed to promise great results. We fear that there is much prejudice abroad against a Minister of Public Education, from the fear of his assuming too despotic powers. But it is evident that he could not interfere with any existing rights except by Act of Parliament. On the other hand, such a Minister would give the most essential help towards the great cause of schools for the poor, as well as to the London and to the Scotch Universities. Unless it is the special and sole business of some functionary to attend to such things, nothing is likely to be done with energy: for which reason it would be good for the friends of Public Education, in Lancashire and elsewhere, definitely to consider the subject. Nothing indeed in this direction will be done, until our finances are on a better footing; but the public mind may nevertheless be prepared, and the result will in due time follow.

ART. II.—QUETELET: *Du Systeme Social.*

THE present work, M. Quetelet tells us, is a continuation of those studies which have already appeared under the titles of "*Essai de Physique Sociale*," and "*Lettres sur la Théorie des Probabilités*." In the second of those works he has already indicated that the sum of individual agencies tended to produce a certain mean result, according to what he termed "the law of accidental causes:" thus the average man in a nation, whether as to stature, weight, mind, or moral temperament, was an important subject for study, since he was the type from which his fellow-countrymen differed, either falling short or exceeding him, from the influence of accidental causes, and which causes were susceptible of calculation.

In this new work, he shows that the "law of accidental causes" is one of general application to individuals as to races and nations—a law which affects our moral and intellectual qualities, as much as it does our physical development. Free-will, so conspicuous when we study how it impels a single individual, seems almost to disappear as we contemplate large masses of mankind. Nay, those very actions resulting from the undoubted, unmistakable will and pleasure of man, appear to recur and to be performed by him with even greater regularity and more constant and exact proportion than do the facts which are the consequences of simple physical laws, and apparently withdrawn from out of the reach of human passion or caprice.

"If from the rigging of a great ship I survey the ocean, I see wave after wave follow in majestic procession, but without my being able to discern either the point of their origin or of their disappearance; but if I descend from the lofty ship, and seat myself in a small bark down on the level of the water; if I there fix my attention on the little oscillating movements that furrow the surface of the sea, I lose the magnificent sight which first occupied me. It is the utmost if I can discover anything beyond the billow on which I float; but on the other hand, I behold an infinity of details which had escaped my attention. Similar is the spectacle presented by nations. Seen at a certain distance they stand out in bold relief,

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assume certain characters, follow certain destinies, without our being able, for the greater part of the time, to trace their origin or their end; some proud and turbulent; others supple, displaying the most capricious forms. Individual existences are thus hardly identified; in order to study any of them, one must bend one's whole attention upon them, losing sight of the immensity of that other ocean on which one is thus navigating; one must seize in an instant those fugitive outlines which rarely extend to any distance the circle of their action. But these very waves which represent so many nations are nothing when compared to one more vast—the great tidal wave (our common human nature) which controls the ocean itself throughout which it slowly* unrolls its triumphant march."

The vulgar eye and ordinary understanding cannot measure this universal movement: it is only after long and patient observations, after extensive combinations of results, that we can recede from the consideration of all the details in order to grasp the principle which they tacitly proclaim, and seize its import. From the want of accurate records of observations, observes M. Quetelet, we are still left in the dark, after all the asseverations of writers of antiquity concerning the great size of the men of former ages, as to the fact, whether the human race has, in point of fact, degenerated in its stature. Homer exaggerated the personal strength of preceding generations. Caesar and other Roman writers spoke evidently with awe of the huge bodies of the Gauls (whose descendants, by the bye, so largely escape the conscription by the opposite quality): these generalities tell us nothing except the impressions of the poet or the historian, that he was narrating the exploits of individuals stronger or taller than himself. The mean or average; the height, strength, or other quality, deduced from a careful comparison of some hundreds or thousands of observations, were unknown to the ancients. M. Quetelet thinks that nature composes a normal type in each country, adapted to its climate and to the circumstances in which the human race finds itself situated there: the variations from this type, upwards or downwards, would thus be the result of purely accidental causes:—the standard *homo* would thus be equally dis-

* That slow march never halts, and in parts of the Atlantic (see Mr. Scott Russell's Art. on Waves, in the Encyc. Met.) it proceeds at the rate of 300 or 400 miles an hour.

tant from two groups of equal numbers but opposite qualities, differing with him in plus and minus. The further the groups diverged, the less numerous they would be, till their extremes terminated perhaps in a single giant on the one side, and a dwarf on the other. Nevertheless, rare as these two last may be, they are the necessary complements of the exhibition, in which each forms a link of the mysterious chain which binds together a race, a generation, or a nation. From his observations and information drawn from Belgium, France and England, he infers that there is a type for human stature in those countries. The Belgian conscription shows that the men balloted for, one levy, bear collectively exactly the same size as those of the preceding one last year. However, some calamitous seasons, years of great scarcity, leave their evidences deeply furrowed in the human family, "just as severe winters leave their trace in the deposits of woody fibre in the trees of our forests."

As we cannot go back to the records of the past for a definition of the proper normal physical development of men, we might still obtain an approximation to what it now is, by a comparison of all the now existing races from the various regions of the globe. It would be curious to note whether in those countries that socially or politically are making progress, such as the United States, England, and Germany, there were a corresponding superiority of quality and form;—whether in China, Turkey or Spain, which are stationary or retrograde, there is a trace of their decline in the personal inferiority of the mass of individuals composing those nations. But it would be only after a careful comparison of such observations for some generations, that a man could know whether in personal attributes he was the equal of his forefathers.

M. Quetelet earnestly suggests a more constant and close observation of human qualities and measures than has been practised. It is a mistake, he avers, to suppose that this would be an endless task—it would be a work of care rather than of labour. For instance, the proportions of the human figure are so constant, that at whatever age it is observed, a very small number of individuals examined will suffice to afford the pattern; colouring, manner, grace, habit of body, plump or lean, sometimes produce the most striking effects, agreeable or the reverse; and yet the

proportions are scarcely altered—it is a mere glance of the eye that warns us of any discrepancy. The parts most essential to our living and understanding, the functions of vitality and perception, vary but little in size—the head and heart are of nearly the same magnitude in the giant and the dwarf, but this renders the bigness of the one and the smallness of the other so offensive to the sight, each being a violation of the standard of proportion. We are at once shocked with even a trifling departure from that harmony which the human form ought to possess with itself. Men vary in height five or six per cent. from the average without appearing extraordinary, but a variation in the proper normal proportion of that amount in the length of an arm would appear at once most unseemly.

The author's remarks on the *liberum arbitrium*, the mode in which the undoubted free-will of men is exercised, are of striking import. The Belgian statistical documents, which have been kept with great care in that country, show that the annual number of marriages, regard being had to the increase of population, maintains constantly the same proportions—nay, that it varies less even than the number of deaths; although this latter event is not, like the former, an act of the will. “L'on peut dire que la population Belge a payé son tribut au mariage avec plus de régularité qu'à la mort, cependant on ne se consulte pas pour mourir, comme on le fait pour se marier.” But more than that, not only the number of marriages continually recurs, but the proportion of bachelors marrying spinsters, bachelors marrying widows, widowers and spinsters, widowers and widows even, perpetually reappear; and these last unions, however few in quantity, manifest a remarkable identity, of which there exist few stronger instances in statistics. Indeed the harmony of ages is so general, that it almost seems as if severe penalties had been appended by law to marriages between persons of disproportionate years, so minute yet so exact is the ratio in which they return.

“That young man under thirty who espouses a sexagenary bride, was impelled thereto neither by fatality nor by blind passion; he could fully reason and exercise his judgment upon his choice. Yet he has come nevertheless to pay his tribute to the budget which is

voted by the wants and usages of our social organisation; and here again this budget has been paid with greater punctuality than that which we pay to the Exchequer of the State."

These instances, standing prominently out from a long series of studies, induce M. Quetelet to conclude that the *liberum arbitrium*, as far as social phenomena are concerned, is restricted within very narrow limits; that in point of fact, indisputable as it may be for each individual, it is effaced and remains without any perceptible effect when the observations embrace mankind in the mass; for man is as sociable on the one hand as he is selfish on the other,—he voluntarily renounces a great part of his individual caprices, pleasures, feelings and liberty, in order to form an aliquot part of aggregate society, the circle, the city, or the nation, to which he belongs. Insensibly that society dictates its laws and fashions to each of the members that compose it, as long as they voluntarily recognise it. Our dress, style, our hours of exercise, food, even of sleep, are imposed upon us by the universal example of our neighbours, and are more rigorously enforced, or at least more universally obeyed, than any statute.

"Is it strange then that traces of that social slavery should manifest themselves in the complexion of those facts which statistics register? If one marries there are decencies to be consulted, customs to be followed, censures to be avoided; and as these obligations are incumbent on all, the facts that result from them will be general also. The will of the individual is here then no longer the supreme regulator, but that of the people to whom the individual belongs."

To go to another class of occurrences—offences against the laws. France, Belgium, England, and the Grand Duchy of Baden, have for some time carefully compiled and registered the records of criminality. The ages of the convicts have been compared by M. Quetelet, and a remarkable agreement is shown in all these countries (the only ones in which such records have been kept) as to the tendency to crime at different periods of life. Towards the age of puberty it develops itself rapidly, attains its maximum between twenty and thirty, and thence regularly decreases till the close of life. In France, the maximum prevails at twenty-four; in Belgium, at twenty-

six ; in England and Baden, rather sooner. The occurrence of suicides follows another progression. The returns show a slight tendency only as puberty approaches, but it increases up to fifty, and continues even to extreme old age. What is more singular still is, not only the steady ratio of those who die by their own hands ;—but even their ages, and the very instruments and means wherewith self-destruction is inflicted, maintain a similar proportion.

The author thinks that in the course of our existence we undergo many decided modifications, that each of our moral qualities develops itself progressively so as to attain a maximum : but this point, where can we place it ? Can we anticipate it ? Can we calculate for each of the periods of our life the relation or absolute value of any or each of our tendencies ?

Every man has a tendency to yield to some passion or impulse, and will, by so doing, sometimes place himself in opposition to the law. From the normal state of human morality, as well as from the mere standard of size or force, there will be departures, oscillations round a given point, the centre towards which they nevertheless gravitate ; and the aberrations in proportion as they are violent are unusual and rare. But there again the energy of our will comes in to combat, in proportion to the strength of our reasoning power, the effects of those accidental causes, those impulses which tend to mislead us. In this view the author maintains that free-will, so far from being an obstacle to the regular succession of social currents, rather favours their production and continuity, and establishes what at first might appear paradoxical, the deduction that “social phenomena, influenced by man’s free-will, proceed from year to year with greater regularity than those other phenomena purely dependent on material and fortuitous causes.”

The appreciation of the different intellectual qualities so as to assign to each their respective amount of merit and power, due to faculties or acquisitions which cannot be measured against one another, and can be referred to no common test and acknowledge no common factor, is as yet a desideratum. No one has as yet imagined a balance in which the attainments of the mathematician, the painter,

the poet, and the philosopher, can be weighed and compared.

“There are some talents which cannot be manifested short of a considerable lapse of time, because the acquisition of a certain mass of information is the indispensable condition of their appearance. This amount of previous knowledge is not the same for different orders of talent. The painter and the musician, for instance, are not constrained to such protracted studies as the philosopher, in order to arrive at their culminating point. Raphael and Mozart produced master pieces when hardly past their adolescence; while to Molière all the maturity of age was requisite in order to raise him to the level of his chief works.”

Scientific attainments, however, of the same kind can be measured, and the progress positively made in them by different individuals can be ascertained as well as compared relatively one with the other; and this with tolerable exactness. As in the examinations for degrees at the University of Cambridge, and also in those for the admission into some of the lyceums abroad, a number of propositions on the subject-matter of the examination, each previously credited by the examiner with a certain number of marks as indications of their value, is submitted to the candidates. A clear answer to a difficult question, a solution of an intricate problem, may carry twenty or thirty marks, an easier one a proportionate number, a failure zero—and the result permits (with practice on the part of the examiner) a fair appreciation of the acquisitions of the learners in the science which is the object of the examination. This method has been followed for some years at the Royal Military School at Brussels; the mean of all the answers given by the students in the year establishes the value of each course of attendance on lectures, and the success of the instructions so given; and it is found that, tried by this test, the variation of acquirement from year to year is bounded by extremely narrow limits. After mentioning the early manifestation of mathematical talent in Blaise Pascal, La Grange, and Newton, the author observes:—

“We are accustomed to consider mathematics as placed beyond the domain of imagination, and yet perhaps there is no branch of

our knowledge which requires a greater development of this faculty in order to arrive at important discoveries. Many of those who have most distinguished themselves in the career of imagination, have simultaneously cultivated different branches of sciences connected with the art they followed. Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Albert Durer, and Rubens, were not only great painters, but they had studied poetry, mathematics, music, architecture, optics, &c. Albert Durer and Leonardo da Vinci were reckoned among the first geometricians of their epoch. It is only in our modern times that it has been the fashion to repeat that mathematics do not imply the development of the imagination.*

This quality, however, is more usually looked for in poets and dramatists. Among the latter, it appears that tragic authors come sooner to perfection than those who attempt to paint the fashions and foibles of society in the higher (or as we term it genteel) Comedy, which requires, in addition to facility of style and language, an acute habit of observation necessarily resulting from an experience of many years, the condition of ripe age rather than of youth. Molière's best works were not produced until he was bordering on fifty.

"Although tragedy affords a fuller scope for the passions and imagination of the poet, yet comedy requires a more complete development of the reasoning power, a greater acquaintance with mankind, and that calm spirit which the observer can only possess after having survived the extinction of his own more violent passions."

"For who can paint the progress of the wreck,
Himself still clinging to the dangerous deck?
Safe on the shore the Artist first must stand,
And then the pencil trembles in his hand."

MS. poem of Lord Byron.

Our memory, though it will not go back into the first three or four years of our existence, is nevertheless, from infancy, the most active of all our intellectual attributes; it is developed sooner than our imagination, which only

* If further proof were wanting we might refer to the 9th Bridgewater Treatise—to the Discourse on Natural Philosophy, in Lardner's Cyclopaedia—works remarkable for the originality of conception by two of the most eminent mathematicians of our time.

acts on the elements supplied by the memory, investing them, as does a kaleidoscope, with an unusual brilliancy of form and colour. The most brilliant efforts of the fancy indeed seldom absolutely create the objects which most delight and astonish us. A man's genius may enable him to combine pre-existing forms; to contrast, advantageously, things having little obvious relation to each other; to clothe that which is unexpected and new with the resemblance of reality and fact; and it may be said that much of their successful effect depends on the skill and power wherewith they make us feel the combination of the wonderful with the "*vraisemblable*."

There are some curious remarks on the nature of those ties which bind men together and form them into nations. One cannot read without a feeling of solemnity mixed with sadness the induction of the philosopher, that a nation like an individual is composed of homogeneous elements, instinctively performing certain functions, animated by a similar principle of vitality, and subject to the same inevitable destiny of extinction:—

"This body is born, develops itself, passes through the different phases that organized bodies present, and pays like them its tribute to death We ought to consider how nations arise, how they grow, by what symptoms we are to distinguish their greater or less prosperity, how we are to appreciate their moral and physical force, their character in each age, and in short by what period of time their average existence is limited."

Nations are not always composed of similar or harmonious elements; Celt and Saxon, Norman and Dane, are mixed in ours with the ancient British stock. In France, so long divided into petty kingdoms, there has been a still greater variety of infusion into the original tripartite division of Belgian, Celt, and Aquitanian, in which Cæsar found them. The Germans had perhaps more in common with each other than the inhabitants of any one of the modern political divisions of the rest of Europe, and yet from the remotest periods we are led to believe that they were divided into tribes as distinct as any of the electorates and grand duchies subsisting at the present day. Time however and custom, even when the birth and origin has been as violent as the coupling of the Romans and the

Sabines—even when one race has been overrun and subdued by another—gradually calm down resentments, and efface the distinction that once parted the subject from the ruling race. In the earlier periods of the existence of a people on its first emergence from slavery, or from the apprehension of foreign conquest, every member of it is willing to make some sacrifice of his individuality and interests; the love of our common country in her first vigour and first bloom of existence, is far more intense than that which, when superannuated and decrepit, she is capable of inspiring. Rome was preserved by the devotion of the Horatii, of Curius, of the Decii, whose energy might have led them in later times and in altered circumstances,—and despairing of a republic instead of holding to that hope in which they perished,—to enact the feats of Sylla, or Marius, or Julius, or Octavius Cæsar. “*Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.*” The public spirit of a state always pressed upon by surrounding enemies, chastened by occasional misfortunes, kept in wind and exercise by the constant recurrence of hostilities, sufficed to maintain even the consular government and the republican institutions, both so liable to derangement and infirmity, for many generations. “*Sed ubi labore atque justitiâ respublica crevit: reges magni bello domiti; nationes feræ et populi ingentes vi subacti; Carthago, æmula imperii Romani, a stirpe interiit: cuncta maria terreque patebant: fortuna sævire ac miscere omnia cepit.*” Like Sallust, M. Quetelet thinks the rapid acquisition of vast wealth cools down patriotism and substitutes selfishness: “it is then that the nation, deprived of that tribute of duty which every citizen owed to it, beholds the chances of immediate ruin multiplied.” These sentiments, not apparently intended to apply to any particular country at the present time, are worthy of all meditation by ourselves. No nation (except perhaps the United States of North America), at all events no nation in the Old World known to history (which that remarkable progeny of ours *as yet is not*), ever yet appeared so bent upon the mechanical operation of hoarding up riches—the material pursuit of money-making;—“*la devoir sacré de s'enrichir,*” as a witty Frenchman once unjustly qualified a free-trade argument. It is the age of Plugson of Underchot

—as in Rome, “divitiæ honori esse cæpere, et eas gloria, imperium, potentia sequebatur: hebescere virtus; paupertas probro haberi,”—“Poverty is deservedly accounted infamous.”* We are not insensible to the blessings that wealth brings in its train now-a-days—increase of ease, wholesome food, growing exemption from that severe labour now advantageously replaced by engines—all these things tend to reconcile us to the usurper; but such he is, and we wish the advantage was not purchased by the sacrifice of that which is honourable in our national character. The least attractive traits in the portrait of the insular Ulysses are where he is craftily deluding Philoctetes out of his quiver, or learning fortune-hunting from Tiresias. Amid all the political convulsions that agitate Europe, our centre of patriotism, the ventricle through which the current of our life-blood runs, is neither in government offices, royal palaces, or even houses of parliament, but in the temple of Plutus—the Royal Exchange; and there, amid all the anxieties of a sordid diplomacy, men watch and wait and stake their gold for or against the safety, honour, or existence, of nations. “Pale masters of the world,” exclaimed the great Roman patriot, “you have not a foot of ground you can call your own, not a sepulchre in your possession in which your fathers’ ashes rest.” Yet the same reproach can be made now-a-days against the landless lords of scrip and stock, consols and loans, the beatings of whose ignoble pulse are to us, per force, the indications of the elasticity of ministries, and the duration of governments.—M. Quetelet, in aid of his view of the mortality of nations, of their rise, manhood, decline, and death, adduces some ingenious, though not conclusive, instances. To the Egyptian Monarchy, until it was destroyed by the Persians, he awards a duration of 1663 years.† The Jews, from the time of their Exodus till their final dispersion by Vespasian, existed fifteen centuries: the Romans, from the supposed founding of the city, till the extinction of the empire of the West, A.D. 475, 1129: the Greeks, from the time of Pelops and Cadmus, to their subjugation by the Romans, 1410 years. Some doubt

* Sydney Smith.

† Sir Gardner Wilkinson, as is well known to our readers, proves that the Egyptian records are of much greater antiquity than M. Quetelet has allotted to that country.

may be raised as to whether either of the two last fulfilled all the conditions which constitute a nation, in view of the inquiry before us. The Greeks, notwithstanding a similarity of measures, style, and language, can scarcely be said to have united, except on some few and extraordinary occasions,—the siege of Troy, the Persian invasion, and during the brief supremacy of Alexander. Of government they had every variety; tyrannies, aristocracies, limited monarchies, and democracy, all existing in various parts at the same time. If political unity is any symptom or quality of national existence, they are no more entitled to be considered as one nation than the United States of America and ourselves at the present day. The case of the Romans is more anomalous. A tribe establishes itself in a city, imposes by its energy and its arms, a dominion over all its neighbours,—the latter are allowed to preserve their municipal laws, their customs, and local magistracy, provided they obeyed the mandates of the *Senatus populusque Romanus*, that is, certain landowners of Latium and burgesses of Rome, who alone elected the men who governed the world: the rest of the Roman empire, until the time of the Cæsars, had only to be governed, to contribute their military contingent, their supplies of corn, their share of imports, in the distribution of which they had no vote. For many ages none but those belonging to the city itself could bear sway. Later, a stranger from the provinces had an occasional chance. Such a one was Marius. Born a client of a Roman noble, an anecdote related of him by Plutarch affords a curious instance of the existence of feudality: where the man of prætorian dignity, the officer who had commanded the armies of the republic, was obliged to plead and argue that very circumstance, to emancipate him from the servile tenure by which he was yet bound in fealty to the great Herennian house.

We must, however, return to M. Quetelet's theory. It will hardly be thought that a sufficient number of births and deaths of peoples have as yet been noted to permit him to establish anything like a mean. Besides, unless a nation dies out by a course of nature, expires, effete, as it were of inanition, it cannot properly be made to serve as the basis of any such calculation. A violent, sudden onslaught and conquest, or the prevalence of extreme folly in

the councils of those who rule, be they prince or people, may put an end to the power, influence, or even the continuance of a nation, just as a suicide, a murder, or a lunacy, may terminate the career of a single individual; but we have no right to introduce such exceptional cases into the necessarily limited numbers from which our average must be drawn. The following notion of M. Quetelet is reasonable enough. The infancy of governments is inclined to the monarchical; their manhood is more or less constitutional or republican; their decline is marked by a surrender up again into the hands of a supreme ruler of that power which their loss of vigour and of confidence in themselves incapacitates them from any longer wielding.

Grave apprehensions are evidently entertained by M. Quetelet on the subject of the increase of population. Mankind (however much Malthus may be abused for reminding them of that unwelcome circumstance) always tend to tread up to the limits of subsistence.

"In those countries where the population has already attained that fatal level, the vessel must overflow, and the overflow be lost. There are but two ways of meeting this crisis—either take away from the population their tendency to increase beyond their limits, or multiply the means of subsistence and improve the mode of distribution also, and preservation."

This latter our late repeal of the corn-laws and other free-trade measures may aid in doing—but it is for a time. The author observes, too, that whatever be man's activity in producing food cheap, it will always be overtaken by his tendency to multiply the mouths of those who are to consume it. He adds, that the vacuum created in Germany by the annual emigration of some 70,000 or 80,000 of its inhabitants to North America is but a temporary and costly palliation. On the other hand, in Bavaria, it has been attempted to prohibit marriages between parties unable to fulfil certain pecuniary conditions; but the result is this, illegitimate births nearly equal the issue of lawful unions.

"We have morality and religion enough to disapprove of the hideous excesses of ancient nations—of the Chinese of the present time; but we have not enough to practise the virtue which would

arrest us on the brink of the precipice. Forethought ought to prevent us from forming inconsiderate marriages, and giving birth to children whom it will be impossible for us to nurture."

The difficulties of the subject are elicited by the opposite varieties of opinions entertained upon it by statist and moral philosophers. M. Quetelet (a catholic) asks—

"Does the Roman Catholic priesthood violate a law of nature when it practises celibacy?" "Besides," he argues, "it is not proposed to prohibit marriage, it is only advisable to recommend forethought, and to counsel celibacy only to those who think themselves unable to provide for their maintenance and that of their offspring, and it is for the sake of humanity that we ask for this. . . . And moreover we only address ourselves to men whom we believe to be sufficiently religious and moral not to plunge themselves into excesses still more reprehensible."

The late M. T. Sadler, in his *Theory of Population*, judging from the peerage and baronetage (the only registers wherein the ages at death had been carefully noted for some generations), had remarked that the higher classes barely reproduced themselves, indicating a tendency to become extinct, which in fact is true as to the *male lines* of the greater number of the families who came hither from Normandy. M. Quetelet repeats that it has been thought that those in easier circumstances are less apt to multiply or even to continue than those in the lower ranks of life, a circumstance which led M. Doubleday to venture an extravagant hypothesis which he termed "the true law of population." "But that difference," inquires M. Quetelet, "to what is it owing? to more morality or to more precaution? It is difficult to say."

We have before alluded to Malthus. M. Quetelet, noticing the increase of prostitution and of illegitimate births, observes, in terms almost identical with those of the "Essay on Population"—

"In a country in which pauperism is rife, who will make room for the intruders who come in annually by forbidden doors to claim a share of that which is already barely sufficient for the population? for there is no compromise; the superfluous must resign themselves to death or exile. . . . Let that mother know beforehand that she contracts a debt towards society, and that she is to discharge it by

her application and her assiduity. We must free ourselves of our pretended ideas of humanity; we must apply searching remedies, for we are in the presence of great evils. . . . One general principle should never be lost sight of, and it is this; that society should avoid taking the place of individuals in all that relates to forethought."

In Belgium, with a population of 4,298,562, the natural children are every year 10,000. In France, out of 981,000 births, above 70,000 are bastards. "*Dans les villes,*" says M. Quetelet, "*l'on peut dire, sans exagérer, que l'accroissement de la population s'y forme à peu près exclusivement de naissances illégitimes.*" The immorality in this respect of large cities is very prominent. It appears that at Berlin the proportion of the latter to the whole number of births is 15 per cent.—at Petersburg 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.—at Paris 29 $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.—at Vienna it reaches the enormous amount of 46 per cent.—while in England it is only 6 $\frac{1}{2}$, and in London 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. The urban population seem in general, then, to be more reckless, to be exposed to greater temptation. London forms a marked, and, it may be added, unintelligible exception, and one which, in a nation so prolific, we can hardly flatter ourselves is exclusively due to the chastity of its inhabitants. In the discussions which have taken place with regard to these inroads upon decencies in England during the last thirteen years, it has been too much the habit to meet the question solely as one for the incidence of the burden of nurture on the one hand, and of the quantum of punishment due to the reputed father on the other—and these two comparatively subordinate points have diverted public attention from the higher problem, the diminution of the offence by introduction of more general notions of self-respect, and still more by a better arrangement of those early domestic conditions on which it has been shown that the preservation of innocence depends, to a very great extent. The Conscience is too often enlightened by culture, after the treasure of which it was to have been the guardian, is lost—and the Social law is never recognized till it reflects disfranchisement of some kind on its violator. Since in all countries the honour and courage of the men will be found to bear some ratio to the virtue of the women, it is surely of greater moment to aim at preventing the

commission of the offence, than the mere distribution of the share of after-inconveniences which are to attach to each of the surreptitious parents.

In France, under the old Bourbons, the army and the church received the cadets of the aristocracy. The first profession exposed life, the second, by imposing celibacy, prevented the conferring it; and though this has long been altered, the infecundity of French marriages in the upper and middle ranks is well ascertained. The author indeed concludes that "great families, nay all those which transmit themselves by legitimate descent, have little chance to preserve themselves—the level of the population being maintained only by the sum of all the births in and out of wedlock, the more numerous these last become, the more difficulty, *ceteris paribus*, will the first-named families experience in transmitting themselves in the direct line." This is a sweeping postulate: if admitted, it argues, that notwithstanding the greater general diffusion of Christian morality, at any rate the profession and jactitation of it, in spite, too, of the invitation held out by poor-laws in many parts of Europe to marry rather than do worse, the proportion of bastardy to legitimacy is now greater than it was in times of simplicity and barbarism. On one point he seems decidedly mistaken, in supposing that the greater the tendency to increase, the greater the obstacles—that the latter augment as the square of the ratio at which the population is advancing. This appears to be only true in barbarous states without industry or commerce, with no opportunity of making good their deficiencies from abroad: but even then they are wholly without records to which we can appeal for a solution of the problem. It does not apply in the British Islands, where the most destitute (and even abject) are relieved of all necessity for forethought, and where the effects of the most disastrous years are only felt in an extra shilling or two of poor-rate in the pound on the property and industry of the rest of the country.

The proportion of births to deaths is not of so much importance in elucidating the condition of a population as the mean age attained by those who die; it is by the latter that we should be disposed to estimate both the power of a state and the happiness of the individuals composing it.

The mere power of procreation and parturition adds nothing to the vigour of a nation, unless there is an ability and a willingness on the part of the parents to rear the offspring they have introduced into the world. The abuse of poor-laws in this country has somewhat impaired the sense of this duty. M. Quetelet thinks that "the physical importance of a nation lies in the excess of productive over the burdensome years, which together make up the ages of all the individuals composing the nation." Assuming then man only begins to be positively productive at 15 years old, all those above that age would reckon as plus, all below minus. Now the mere average age at death would not be a safe guide without some other particulars. For instance, two persons die, respectively aged 2 years and 58 years, their mean life is 30; two other persons dying at 10 and 50 produce the same mean. And again it is the same for two others who die at 20 and 40. The respective value of their lives to the community of which they were members, analysed by the test of productiveness, is very different. The sum of the unproductive years of the first couple shows—

	$2 + 15 = 17$	against	43 productive years	$= \frac{43}{17} = 2.53$
The second:	$10 + 15 = 25$	unproductive	35	$= \frac{35}{25} = 1.40$
The third:	$15 + 15 = 30$	„	30	$= \frac{30}{30} = 1.00$

Do these integers and decimals, while they indicate correctly enough the scale of productiveness belonging to each combination, do they as fairly represent the order in which the distribution of vitality is to be preferred? Be that as it may, the statement shows that averages deduced from authentic but prominent figures require to be thoroughly sifted before we can safely insert them into the foundation of any considerable range of hypothesis.

A too rapid rate of increase, except under the anomalous circumstances proper to the United States and to some of our own colonies, entails degradation and penury. Nay, even an advance in mechanical art and handicraft in a nation may be unaccompanied by a corresponding progress in humanity and intelligence on the part of the many who produce. Many generations back, the Chinese were as

civilized as their descendants of our day, and more manly, just, and true, in their dealings: they now combine the same excellence and skill in manufactures, with gross and universal dishonesty. Surely the nobler part of man's nature, a sound and healthy standard of feeling, is of more moment than a power of producing certain manufactures at a given price, or of executing certain works within a limited time. The vanity of the Pharaohs or the Cæsars may gratify the wonder of posterity with the toil of subject generations. Even we, in these latter and more reasonable times, may erect our mercantile and manufacturing pyramids, or construct our more than Roman roads; yet the grandeur of our Phœnician enterprises is to be estimated by the sentiments which they excite and deepen, the moral contentment they are accessory to diffusing, the intelligence and the virtue of the community engaged in prosecuting them. The breadth and thickness of that stratum of humanity in which the fountain of public opinion accumulates, the level at which it springs, the purity and constancy of its flow, are all necessary elements for enabling us to judge of the benefits of its course. Its harmony with the law is a certain indication both of its own healthy state, and of the fitness of the latter. The strongest laws are those which are so firmly rooted in the sympathies and convictions of society that they are executed, as it were, without the intervention of official agency—they often form no part of written and printed statutes—sometimes erect themselves in opposition to the edicts of the legislator and the injunctions of the divine—neither of whom suffice to abolish entirely the resort to the duel after particular outrages for which they have provided no adequate compensation. This sympathy between the laws of a state and the feelings of its inhabitants can only be expected, however, when the latter have a large share in forming, or at least when they assent to, the institutions by which they are ruled. And their fitness for such a function will depend on the extent and influence of that middle class which represents the average of society, and the centre towards which its extremes gravitate. In Russia and Turkey there exist only the extremes, without the intervening medium—the despots above and the slaves below. It is only in the most civilized countries of Europe that we meet with

that mediocrity of fortune and moderation of sentiment—that we find a class placed in circumstances sufficiently easy to exempt them from unremitting exertion, and yet with incentives of honour and profit bidding them persevere in the career they respectively follow. But the possession of money, ease, and even of knowledge, will not entitle the class which enjoys them to respect from the orders beneath it, or to influence with the legislature of the state, if it be not itself animated by higher than mere gross material motives of action. As to knowledge—China has long been afflicted with pedants in her administration, and in Germany the scholastic element has just burst out in undeserved, but probably transient, importance: the sceptre has given way to the ferule. These pedagogues after all are but the drill-sergeants who can mark the time for the march, and take care that the exercise is performed according to the order-book of antiquity; but they cannot, during the advance of the army through the defile that nations are now threading, quit the ranks to mount on horseback, or climb an eminence, in order to descry the direction to which the closely-wedged columns they form part of are wending. This is the privilege of a gifted few, among whom we are inclined to place M. Quetelet. He is the first to assign to Social Physiology—that science which treats of the moral anatomy of nations—its right importance and definition. It is not to be confounded with Political Economy, which is only the *modus operandi* by which man gathers up his additions—adds to his material conquests and enjoyments. The rate at which his accumulation of value and substance proceeds is a totally different affair from the notions with which he carries on his pursuit, and the degree to which a consideration for his neighbour is allowed a share in his thoughts. This again differs from *Physique Sociale*; for this M. Quetelet would limit to the study of the laws regulating the continuance and preservation of our species.

The social physiology whose definitions he sketches, though distinct from each of the preceding, is nevertheless intimately connected with them, since it is by the balance of the feelings thus implanted in us that nations and institutions complete their career of civilization and improvement, or persevere in one of ignorance and barbarism. It

is all the more important, since in the latter condition the intellectual vision is too limited to permit any consciousness of the direction, any survey of the channel along which the nation is floating. In the case of a people more advanced there is an opposite cause of mischief. There may be a consciousness of the course, but without virtue to withstand the temptations that beset it—a perception of the difficulty, but without resolution or self-denial to avoid it; the profession of the austere unpalatable virtue in public, and the practice of the more acceptable vice in private. These violations of faith, and insincerities of practice, cannot be brought home to individual delinquents; we act as it were under the protection of the ballot—in secret; no man proclaims his own misdeeds; but the result of the silent vote in which the majority has concurred, demonstrates* the hollowness of the obeisance that it has made, to the requirements that were in vogue, with the popular tongue, without being deeply seated in the understanding or the heart.

* One of the most dishonourable instances is exhibited by the discrepancies between the various Acts of Parliament on Poor-Law Legislation, and the promises made by the legislators on the hustings.

ART. III.—MARY BARTON.

Mary Barton; a Tale of Manchester Life. Two vols.
London: Chapman and Hall. 1848.

THE changes in literature, like those in laws and manners, do not happen at random, but seem to follow in a kind of cycle which indicates the presence of a law. Given the stage a people have reached in the career of civilization, and we can tell pretty nearly what species of composition—epic, dramatic, didactic, satirical, &c.—will be most in vogue amongst them. It cannot be by a mere accident, that in the later periods of social development, among the ancients as among ourselves, we find the older forms of poetry abandoned, and prose fiction taking their place. The abundance, and generally speaking the excellence, of this last description of writing—the genius attracted to it, the grave moral themes that furnish its interest, the humane and elevated tone of sentiment pervading it—is one of the marked intellectual features of our time. The Novel is now, what the Drama was in the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First—the most popular organ of our national literature. It is not that the spirit of poetry has died out (poetry must not be confounded with metre), but that poetry itself requires a freer utterance for the treatment of some portion of the ampler materials, which a more complex state of society and a greater multiplicity of human interests are ever offering to its choice. The metrical restraints anciently imposed on poetry by its constant association with harp and song, still indeed impart a higher majesty to the recital of grand and heroic action; and the music that is latent in them, responding to the inborn harmonies of the awakened soul, yield a fitting expression for the gush of sorrow or the passionate outburst of enthusiasm and love: but in a lengthened narrative, calculated for the display of character, and intended by its rapid succession of incidents to carry on the reader with a sustained and deepening interest to the catastrophe—the monotony of rhyme and even the measured stateliness of blank verse become oppressively wearisome. For the mi-

nute painting of every-day realities and an effective seizure of the more subtle traits of humour, prose affords the fittest and readiest vehicle. Our old dramatists were aware of this; and with the fine tact of natural feeling dropped from verse into prose, and rose again from prose into verse, as the subject of their scenes required. With the establishment of a more correct standard of taste, the mere narrating and reasoning in rhyme, so popular with our forefathers, will probably cease altogether: and verse will be more and more set apart for the high function of endowing with melodious utterance in the most exquisite form of speech, the selectest thoughts, the loveliest images, the intensest emotions that are swept by the passing breath of inspiration over the trembling chords of human consciousness and sympathy. We have sometimes imagined to ourselves a delightful species of composition—as yet unrecognized in the canons of our traditional criticism, though not without a kind of precedent in the usage of our ancient playwrights—in which the staple of the narrative should flow on in free and natural prose, but scenes of deeper pathos and earnestness assume the solemn rhythmus and lofty diction of tragic dialogue, and mirth or sadness or passion break forth into the wild sweetness of the song or breathe out its soul in the mournful music of elegy. If we remember right, Dickens, in a winter scene in one of his Tales, moulds his words spontaneously into verse, almost as it would seem from the natural melody of his own thoughts—and the strain lasts for a second or two, and then dies away. We are inclined to believe, that the Novel, with many conceivable modifications, will be the form in which much of the poetry of a coming time will be written.

Another peculiarity marks the literature of fiction in advanced periods of civilization—the choice of its subjects from the humbler classes of society. Men become sated with luxury and weary of conventionalisms, and turn for refreshment to the images of a more simple and natural life. In this feeling pastoral poetry had its origin: it was the contrast of a fictitious poverty with the *ennui* of an existence groaning under riches and palled with sensuality, that gave delight. The pastoral does not express the manners and sentiments of the social atmosphere in which it grew (for it was reared in the luxurious court of the

Ptolomies, and then transplanted to that of Augustus), but calls up by artificial reflection scenes far distant or long since passed. In its modern form it is an imitation of the classical model—its pictures as remote from truth and reality, and as ill fitted to bring home the actual condition of the poor to the imagination of the higher ranks. It is remarkable, that this species of composition should have been especially cultivated in the age of Pope and Philips and Gay—that the piping of shepherds and the bleating of flocks and the purling of streams should have been the images, on which every poetaster tried his hand, and which gave a colour even to song-writing and occasional verses, at a period distinguished above all others for the prosaic tone of our general literature and for the cold and worldly selfishness of the prevalent morality.* Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*—a poem for its rural imagery and allusions to be classed with the pastoral—rose immeasurably above these artificial and insipid productions, and by its truthfulness, its simplicity, and its deep natural feeling, announced a great and salutary change in the tendencies of the popular literature. Southey's *Botany Bay Eclogues*, unfortunate in their subject and defective in taste, but containing passages of thrilling pathos, showed further movement in the same direction, and came nearer the verge of human realities. Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* and some of his longer poems of more recent date, have had a similar effect and tendency, and brought us into closer familiarity with the popular heart; although from their scene being generally laid in the wild "poetic mountains" of the North, and their intermixture with philosophic speculation—they retain something of the ideality of the old pastoral. The great revolution was effected by Crabbe. We are just old enough to remember the strong impression made by the first appearance of his poems—how he startled the worshippers of poetical precedents, by scattering to the winds the baseless visions of Arcadian simplicity, and sketching with a stern and faithful pencil a few living pictures of the poor, as he saw them and knew they were. We may perhaps concede, that some of his scenes, revealing the deep-seated vice and corruption of our provincial life, are better suited to the novel than a

* How fashionable this style of poetry then was, we learn from a series of well-known papers in Addison's *Guardian*.

narrative in verse. Verse—the sacred melody of song—we would reserve for the brightest or the highest themes. But he has rendered one inestimable service to our literature. He has opened a door into a new field of description. He has diverted the imagination of the poet from the cloud-land of dreams to the lights and shadows of the living world of man, and, in his darkest pictures of crime and woe, has shown us what elements of beauty and goodness may yet be found in the scenes that daily encompass us, and in the low forgotten depths of our existing Society. Crabbe was familiar with the Borough of the old parliamentary system, the Poor-house, and the smuggling village of the Eastern coast. Since his day a new form of social life has grown up in other regions into unheard-of magnitude, and offers new objects of absorbing interest and anxious speculation to the politician, the economist and the poet. The immense concentration of population in our Northern seats of manufacturing industry, with the modes of thought and the conflict of tendencies generated by it—has become the great social feature of our age—the feature that will mark out and individualise its physiognomy through all coming time. A phenomenon so vast and startling—so ominous of good or of ill to future generations—demands a literature, at once for its interpretation and its guidance; and such a literature it will undoubtedly have, either freely developed out of itself, or brought to it by the loving sympathy of others.

The beautifully told Tale—the Poem in prose—of Mary Barton would on this account alone have excited attention and found a ready hearing. Its great and rapidly won reputation is due to its extraordinary merit. It represents the ideas and passions of a particular class, or rather of a certain portion of a particular class, during a crisis of strong local excitement, when the supposed interests of masters and men were brought into direct collision. With the license conceded to art for the sake of making a deeper impression on the imagination, the authoress has chosen an *exceptional* instead of the *normal* condition of social feeling, as the subject of her fiction. And this must be borne in mind, when its moral tendency is spoken of. From this point of view it should be judged.

The scene is laid in Manchester during the severe com-

mercial depression which prevailed from 1839 to 1841. John Barton, an embittered and prejudiced, but energetic and noble-hearted, operative, stung to madness by witnessing the misery of his class, and fancying their employers grew rich by all this wretchedness without any effort to relieve it—throws himself with passionate earnestness into Trades' Unions and Chartist Associations, goes up on a fruitless deputation to Parliament, listens to the inflammatory harangues of itinerant demagogues, and joins the obstinate Turn-out which compels the masters to import fresh hands from a distance. Domestic griefs and the loss of early friends increase his bitterness of spirit, and deprive him of the few softening influences that he had once enjoyed. Meanwhile his daughter Mary, left to herself while he is busy with politics, flirts giddily in the hope of being made a lady, with the son of one of the masters, though cherishing at heart all the time an unconscious attachment to another—a youth of her own condition in life, and the son of her father's chosen friend. The feud between the employers and the employed reaches a deadly height; and a deputation of the latter having been treated with galling insolence at a conference with the masters, by the rich lover of Mary, a resolution of bloody vengeance is taken, and the lot falls on Barton as the assassin of the insulter of their class.—Before these events occur, Mary has seen the folly of her conduct, repents of her haughty rejection of Jem Wilson, though now unable to reveal her love for him, and resolutely breaks off her connection with young Carson.—When the latter is shot, suspicion falls on Jem, who has been seen a few days previously in vehement altercation with him, and heard to threaten him, if he should manifest any dishonourable intentions towards Mary. Barton, the real murderer, quits Manchester on a deputation to Glasgow; and Jem, against whom circumstantial evidence bears strongly, is committed to take his trial at the impending Assizes in Liverpool.—The interest of the story now deepens almost to painfulness. By the same clue Mary ascertains the guilt of her father and the innocence of Jem; and an intense agony of questioning arises within her, how she may save the one without discovering the other. For the former object, it is necessary to prove an

alibi, and produce in Court a cousin of Jem's, whom he had accompanied to some distance from Manchester on the evening of the murder. On arriving at Liverpool, Mary finds to her consternation, that the witness she was in quest of, who was a sailor, had just left port for a distant voyage, pursues him in an open boat to the mouth of the river, hails him as the vessel is hoisting sail to cross the bar, receives a half-understood promise that he will come back in the pilot-boat to give evidence, and returns in painful doubt, whether she has accomplished the object of her mission. Next day she undergoes an examination in Court, and before she leaves the witness-box, makes an unreserved declaration of her love for Jem. As the case is drawing to a close, and a verdict is confidently expected against the prisoner, the sailor-witness suddenly appears, and establishes an *alibi* which leads to the acquittal of Jem. Mary's mind, that had sustained her up to this point, now breaks down under an accumulation of conflicting feelings, and she is laid up for many days with a delirious fever, during which she is tenderly watched over by Jem.—On her recovery they return together to Manchester, where she finds her miserable father—a wreck in body and in soul. He makes a confession of his guilt to the father of the murdered youth, and expires under the death-wound of an accusing conscience. After a short interval, the lovers are united, and emigrate to Canada, where the concluding scene leaves them happily settled in a pleasant cottage and garden not far from Toronto.

Such is a brief outline of the story. The interest of which it is susceptible, must be obvious. To fulfil its demands and make the most of its opportunities, was a severe test of genius. It is high praise to say, that the authoress has reached the height of her argument, and that the treatment equals the design. The conception of the whole is compact and forcible. The incidents are so happily arranged, and flow so easily and naturally out of each other with the progress of the narrative, that we could almost suspect a long-practised pen; and if this be indeed a first production, it is a surprising work. The style is full of life and colour, betraying a quick observant eye. It grasps its objects with remarkable steadiness and precision, does not dwell too long on any one, but throws in just enough of indivi-

dual traits to realise it distinctly to the imagination.—We have thought the conclusions of the chapters particularly excellent. There is never any wearisome winding up, but attention is roused by a smart stroke or two, a question perhaps or significant hint, which leaves a pungent relish on the reader's mind, and makes him long for the next. As for the northern *patois* which is liberally introduced into the dialogue, we are not ourselves sufficiently masters of it, to say how far it may be taken as a correct representation of the language of the people; but the copious sprinkling of it on every page, is to our feelings very agreeable, as giving a peculiar raciness to the speech of shrewd and earnest men, and diffusing a warm local hue, without vulgarity or obscurity, over the whole narrative. It is only giving to the operatives of Lancashire, the same kind of picturesque individuality, which Scott in his immortal tales has conferred on the peasantry of Scotland.

Our authoress seizes with singular felicity the salient points of character and manners, and paints them distinctly to the very eye. Take the opening chapter. The description of the sauntering groups of holiday idlers—the dress and bearing of the girls, and the rude gallantry exchanged between them and the lads, with the married couples quietly trailing along their toddling little ones—will strike every inhabitant of Manchester with its vivid truthfulness. Then, the tea-party at Barton's at the conclusion of the afternoon's stroll—the arrangement and furniture of the house—the luxuries which cover the table, the self-forgetting heartiness with which the hospitality is dispensed, and the bright blazing fire filling the little room with its ruddy cheerful glow—are a complete and most admirable piece of Dutch painting, which for the accuracy of its details respecting the habits and economy of the poor might almost be studied by a collector of social statistics.

The characters in this Tale have great variety and contrast, are finely discriminated, and sustained with a vigilant consistency.—Barton himself, we have heard, is a draught from the life. Jem is a noble fellow, brave and enduring, and full of gentle feeling—the true hero of the story. Old Job Legh with his odd volumes of books and his entomological rarities is a fine specimen of a form of character

not uncommon among the workmen of Lancashire, quiet, studious, contemplative—a philosopher of nature's making—amidst the din of manufactures and the many distractions of poverty, serenely finding his happiness in silent thought and the observation of God's works. Mary's impulsiveness and lively fancy are set off by the plain sense and steady principle of her friend Margaret. Will Wilson is an honest kind-hearted sailor of the ordinary stamp. Old Sturgis has a more strongly-marked individuality, but somewhat inclining to caricature. Poor Esther's story throws a deeper shade into the dark background of the picture, and stands out in sad relief against the womanly purity which sheds over it a sweet and holy glow. Perhaps the most beautiful creation in the whole book is Alice. Her unconscious goodness, her faith in God never forsaking her, her unselfish devotion to the service of others, her gratitude for the smallest mercies, the childlike innocence and simplicity of her spirit, and the still and quiet happiness that floats round her whole being, like the fresh and pure air of her native hills—are truly delightful. But for the earlier conception of Jenny Deans (though cast in quite another mould), it would have been difficult to believe, that simple goodness in so humble a garb could be made so interesting and so beautiful. One such example drawn in these living colours, teaches us more than many sermons.

The passages which would probably most strike the general reader—the fire at Carson's factory, the pursuit of the ship containing the witness, and the scene at Jem Wilson's trial—are not those which we should ourselves select as the clearest proofs of genius. They are powerfully wrought and excite a thrilling interest; but the interest is of that kind and composed of those elements which we meet with in all novels, and which a clever imitator, void of all originality, might work up with tolerable effect. They are founded on the love of strong excitement, the least pure and exalted of all the resources of art. We turn with far greater delight and deeper admiration to the soft and quiet touches of natural pathos and the incidental revelations of character with which the tale abounds. Here we trace real genius, and own the presence of a beautiful and highly-gifted mind, full of sensibility—familiar with

man's heart—giving out its sympathies in rich unconscious overflow wherever human joy or human sorrow come before it. It is in this by-play of the general action, where nothing great is thought of, and no effect is contemplated, that the workings of true genius betray themselves most unequivocally. A few instances of this kind struck us particularly. After the terrible excitement of the fire described in the fifth chapter, when old Wilson has been rescued from the flames by the heroism of his son, the then rejected lover of Mary Barton, whose coldness cuts him to the quick—the father, with his heart full of the noble conduct of his brave boy, overtakes Mary and her companion as they are walking home, and says to the former—

“ ‘Mary, if my boy comes across you to-night, give him a kind word or two for my sake. Do ! bless you, there ’s a good wench.’ ”
—P. 83.

Who does not feel the tenderness there is in these few words?—Of a similar character is the death scene of the twins at the Wilson's, when Jem returns from his work, with an orange in each of his pockets for the poor boys and finds them dead—and stands shaking with speechless grief beside the bed where his little brothers are laid in the silence of death—till Mary, forgetting her coldness in her sympathy, goes up and gently lays her hand on his arm, and bids him not grieve so.

“He did not speak, as though fearing to destroy by sound or motion the happiness of that moment when her soft hand's touch thrilled through his frame, and her silvery voice was whispering tenderness in his ear.”—P. 119.

The following passage may possibly offend the fastidious. To us it conveys a shrewd reading of human character mingled with genuine pathos. It is where Margaret tells her friend Mary, how, finding her sight fail, she had begun to earn money by singing, that she might not be a burden to her grandfather, Job Legh, with whom she lived, and how the old man had taken this announcement of her new mode of life.

“ ‘Well, but what did your grandfather say ?’ ‘Why, Mary,’ said Margaret, half smiling, ‘I am a bit loath to tell you, for unless

yo knew grandfather's ways like me, yo'd think it strange. He were taken by surprise, and he said : Damn yo ! Then he began looking at his book as it were, and were very quiet, while I telled him all about it ; how I'd feared, and how downcast I'd been ; and how I were now reconciled to it, if it were the Lord's will ; and how I hoped to earn money by singing ; and while I was talking, I saw great big tears come dropping on the book ; but in course I never let on that I saw 'em. Dear Grandfather ! and all day long he's been quietly moving things out of my way, as he thought might trip me up, and putting things in my way as he thought I might want ; ne'er knowing I saw and felt what he were doing ; for yo see, he thinks I'm out and out blind, I guess—as I shall be soon."—P. 147.

Old Job's piety is characteristic, and in harmony with the gentle humanity of his whole being. Mary is about to set off on her journey to Liverpool :—

" 'Well, Mary ! I'll give you my prayers,' said Job, 'it's not often I pray regular, though I often speak a word to God, when I'm either very happy, or very sorry ; I've catched myself thanking him at odd hours, when I've found a rare insect, or had a fine day for an out ; but I cannot help it, no more than I can talking to a friend.'"
—Vol. II. p. 96.

The following passage discovers the writer's access to the deepest springs of human feeling. It describes an evening after the murder (as yet unknown to Mary), when Barton is sitting stern and gloomy in his house just before his departure for Glasgow, wrapt in himself, indifferent to the presence of his old friend Legh, and harshly repelling the soft and winning arts of his daughter to cheer him. Suddenly he rises without speaking a word, and quits the house. Mary follows him to the door ; and ere he turns the corner of the court, his heart oppressed with the weight of crime, relents—and he comes back and takes his daughter in his arms and says—

" 'God bless thee, Mary ! God in heaven bless thee, poor child.' She threw her arms round his neck."—Vol. II. p. 312.

The next moment he was gone.

It is difficult to read this without tears.

We found ourselves deeply touched with the few simple but exquisitely significant words which close the Tale, in that sweet and sunshiny scene at the Canadian cottage,

when Jem brings the news that old Job is intending to cross the ocean, and visit the friends of former years :—

“ ‘ Dear Job Legh,’ said Mary, softly and seriously.”

What a fulness of meaning there is in this ! It has the pregnant brevity which we have noticed as characterizing the conclusions of the chapters.

The fountains of mirth and sadness spring up side by side, and sometimes mingle their waters in their passage through the soul. Mary Barton is rich in humour as well as in pathos. The mermaid scene between Will Wilson and Job Legh is exceedingly comic. There are passages where the humour and the pathos are intermixed, and pass into each other. This power of rapid transition is no common gift. We might select as an example, John Barton's account of his deputation to London ; and perhaps still better, Job Legh's description of his visit to the same place, to attend the death-bed of his only child and her husband, and of his return with the baby accompanied by the husband's father. The perplexities of the two old men about their infant charge, their trouble with it at night, their ludicrous expedients to keep it quiet, the sharp contrast of their characters and their altercations—are described with exquisite humour, and yet blended with such touches of natural feeling, such strains of sadness coming unbidden from the full heart, as render this whole narrative one of the most remarkable in the book, for the display it affords of the varied powers of the writer. As a painting of the stern realities of want and sickness, we know few things finer than the following description. It is almost *Dantesque* (if we may be pardoned the affectation of such a word) in its terrible truthfulness. It is from the cellar of the Davenports, to whom Barton and Wilson had gone to afford relief, while the husband was stretched on the only bed, dying of fever.

“ So Barton was now left alone with a little child, crying (when it had done eating) for mammy ; with a fainting, dead-like woman ; and with the sick man, whose mutterings were rising up to screams and shrieks of agonised anxiety. He carried the woman to the fire, and chafed her hands. He looked around for something to raise her head. There was literally nothing but some loose bricks. However, those he got ; and taking off his coat he covered them

with it as well as he could. He pulled her feet to the fire, which now began to emit some faint heat. He looked round for water, but the poor woman had been too weak to drag herself out to the distant pump, and water there was none. He snatched the child, and ran up the area steps to the room above, and borrowed their only saucepan with some water in it. Then he began, with the useful skill of a working-man, to make some gruel; and when it was hastily made he seized a battered iron table-spoon (kept when many other little things had been sold in a lot, in order to feed baby), and with it he forced one or two drops between her clenched teeth. The mouth opened mechanically to receive more, and gradually she revived. She sat up and looked round; and recollecting all, fell down again in weak and passive despair. Her little child crawled to her, and wiped with its fingers the thick-coming tears which she now had strength to weep. It was now high time to attend to the man. He lay on straw, so damp and mouldy no dog would have chosen it in preference to flags; over it was a piece of sacking, coming next to his worn skeleton of a body; above him was mustered every article of clothing that could be spared by mother or children this bitter weather; and in addition to his own, these might have given as much warmth as one blanket, could they have been kept on him; but as he restlessly tossed to and fro, they fell off and left him shivering in spite of the burning heat of his skin. Every now and then he started up in his naked madness, looking like the prophet of woe in the fearful plague-picture; but he soon fell again in exhaustion, and Barton found he must be closely watched, lest in these falls he should injure himself against the hard brick floor. He was thankful when Wilson re-appeared, carrying in both hands a jug of steaming tea, intended for the poor wife; but when the delirious husband saw drink, he snatched it with animal instinct, with a selfishness he had never shown in health."—Vol. I. pp. 92-4.

The image of the little child going up to its mother and wiping away her tears with its fingers, is conceived in the very soul of pathos.*

Let us add to this another scene, as full of woe but of a different kind—John Barton sitting alone by his cold

* In Chaucer's version of the Ugolino scene from Dante, are some lines which we have ever considered as the perfection of pathos.

"Thus day by day this childe began to cry,
Till in his fadre's barme adoune it lay,
And saide; farewel, fader, I mote die;
And kist his fader, and dide the same day."

This and the picture from *Mary Barton* are pendants.

grate, after his return from Glasgow, in his silent and desolate home—and discovered by his daughter.

“Her hand was on the latch, and in a breath the door was opened.

“There sat her father, still and motionless, not even turning his head to see who had entered; but perhaps he recognised the foot-step—the trick of action.

“He sat by the fire; the grate I should say, for fire there was none. Some dull, grey ashes, negligently left, long days ago, coldly choked up the bars. He had taken the accustomed seat from mere force of habit, which ruled his automaton-body. For all energy, both physical and mental, seemed to have retreated inwards to some of the great citadels of life, there to do battle against the Destroyer, Conscience.

“His hands were crossed, his fingers interlaced; usually a position implying some degree of resolution, or strength; but in him it was so faintly maintained, that it appeared more the result of chance; an attitude requiring some application of outward force to alter,—and a blow with a straw seemed as though it would be sufficient.

“And as for his face it was sunk and worn,—like a skull, with yet a suffering expression that skulls have not! Your heart would have ached to have seen the man, however hardly you might have judged his crime.

“But crime and all was forgotten by his daughter, as she saw his abashed look, his smitten helplessness. All along she had felt it difficult (as I may have said before) to reconcile the two ideas, of her father and a blood-shedder. But now it was impossible. He was her father! her own dear father! and in his sufferings, whatever their cause, more dearly loved than ever before. His crime was a thing apart, never more to be considered by her.

“And tenderly did she treat him, and fondly did she serve him in every way that heart could devise, or hand execute.

“She had some money about her, the price of her strange services as a witness; and when the lingering dusk drew on, she stole out to effect some purchases necessary for her father's comfort.

“For how body and soul had been kept together, even as much as they were, during the days he had dwelt alone, no one can say. The house was bare as when Mary had left it, of coal, of candle, of food, or of blessing in any shape.”—Vol. II. pp. 246-7.

We have thought these few extracts would say more for Mary Barton, than any lengthened criticism. They will

justify the high admiration that we feel and that we sincerely and heartily express—for the genius and sensibility—the true spirit of humanity—revealed in the book.—We would notice in passing an occasional peculiarity in the writer's treatment of her subject, which marks strong individuality, and implies great wealth of resources and ready command over all the springs of interest, but which, unless watched by a severe taste, may become mannerism:—we allude to her evident fondness for a sharp contrast of feelings—a bringing of two opposite states of mind into immediate collision—as if to show how near together lie the sources of joy and sorrow, of good and evil, in the human soul,—and producing in the representation of action a similar effect to that of antithesis or *concelto* in style. We have observed three remarkable instances of this.—Mary returning home with a heart full of sorrow and fear, having just heard of young Carson's murder, and distracted by her own unhappy relations with Jem, meets a little starving Italian boy, and at first absorbed by her own feelings, treats with indifference his piteous entreaties for a bit of bread,—till she bethinks herself, and fetches her only crust to give him, and feels softened and comforted by the return of her natural tenderness. This is sweetly and simply told.—Conceived in the same spirit, but with contrast more strongly brought out, is an incident in John Barton's dark history. As he quits his home moody and stern for Glasgow, with the consciousness of crime heavy on his soul, just after the short and passionate farewell to his daughter, which we have already quoted—he meets in the streets, now dusky with the shades of evening, a poor little child that has lost its way and is crying bitterly for its mother. His half-extinguished tenderness revives within him;—the sympathies of home come back; he takes the little wanderer by the hand; deposits it safely with its parents; and then gloomily pursues his destined way.—A third instance is, where the elder Carson, intent on vengeance, and determined never to forgive the murderer of his son, is reminded of the beauty of another feeling, on seeing a little sportive girl who has been rudely knocked down by a heedless passer by, though much hurt, exhibit no resentment, but entreat that the offender may be pardoned and let go.—It is evi-

dent that the same feeling,—the same general conception,—is at the bottom of all these incidents. The last of them is to our taste the least pleasing and the worst executed. There is something far-fetched and calculated in the effect aimed at, with more of an evident tendency to mannerism.

Mary Barton is so strong in genuine excellence, that it can well bear a faithful criticism. Some few blemishes have struck us in its conception and execution, which we shall not hesitate to mention.—We confess, then, that the worst thing in the whole Tale seems to us the character of its heroine, or rather the unnatural combination of the two elements that go to make up her character. Take away the extraneous addition, and leave us the genuine Mary Barton, the simple-hearted and faithful mistress of Jem,—such as we can suppose the first pure conception presented itself to the mind of the author—and nothing can be imagined more lovely and engaging. But to this is prefixed—whether from the supposed necessities of the plot or from a gratuitous love of contrast—a character of quite another hue, which is out of harmony with it; and the discrepancy between the two involves consequences in the development of the story, which form the chief drawback on its general impression of naturalness and probability. We refer of course to Mary's flirtations with Mr. Carson, and her strange ignorance of the real state of her feelings towards Jem. After the final conversion of her heart to him, every thing in her conduct is so pure, so thoughtful, so wise, that we wonder, how before that time, with the secret consciousness of loving another better, she could have allowed herself to encourage attentions from her rich admirer—to have “given him stolen meetings” and “strolled with him on summer evenings,” and “listened to his honied words with a blush and a smile,” when with the shrewdness and intelligence ascribed to her, she must have suspected that all these things were not meant to terminate in any honourable result. The authoress seems to have felt that this was the difficult part of her Tale, by the indirect excuses and apologies for Mary's conduct that are from time to time thrown into the narrative. After all, the ultimate change is the work of a moment, and an instan-

taneous transition is made from one character to the other, of which a kind of psychological explanation is offered to the reader. Mary has rejected Jem, and told him she can never become his wife. He flings out of the house in despair, threatening her with the possible effect of her refusal on his own character and actions. He is scarcely gone, when she relents, understands the condition of her own heart, and calls after him, but in vain.

"It was as if two people were arguing the matter; that mournful desponding communion between her former self and her present self; herself, a day, an hour ago; and herself now. For we have every one of us felt how a very few minutes of the months and years called life, will sometimes suffice to place all time past and future in an entirely new light; will make us see the vanity or the criminality of the bye-gone, and so change the aspects of the coming time, that we look with loathing on the very thing we have most desired. A few moments may change our character for life, by giving a totally different direction to our aims and energies."—P. 203.

This is evidently intended as a key to the reading of Mary's character, and a justification of its general conception. To us it is not satisfactory. A change of object and the determination of a wavering purpose may be effected by the strong impression of a moment, but never the complete transformation of a character. If Mary had been the vain, selfish, cold-hearted creature which her connection with Mr. Carson implied—encouraging attentions without affection and stifling a purer love in her heart—years would have been required to convert her into the sweet and gentle and earnest being which she is represented as having immediately become; and to preserve consistency in the groundwork of her character, traces of her former self should have shown themselves in the latter part of her history. Tried by the ordinary rules of human conduct, we should say that her behaviour at the turning point of her history, when she flatly rejected her true lover, showed that she did not know her own mind to the last moment, and if analogies are any ground of inference, would justify the apprehension, that had he come back and renewed his suit, he might again have had to encounter the same waywardness and caprice.

Her childish fickleness on this occasion seems to us strangely at variance with the calm and thoughtful heroism of her subsequent conduct. Resulting from the false position in which she had placed herself towards Jem Wilson, as a sort of poetical consequent—is the unseemly rectification of it by her gratuitous declaration of love for him in the open court—a feeling which the circumstances of the time would rather have led her to suppress, and the unreserved display of which on such an occasion we regard as the worst conceived and least natural incident in the story.

A similar inconsistency, though of a slighter kind, is discernible in the character of John Barton, from the attempted union of incompatible elements. To extenuate his wild and erring career and reconcile it with the general nobleness and benevolence of his spirit, the blame is thrown on his want of education and his ignorance of the distinction between right and wrong. It is clear, however, that he knew enough to save him from his criminal courses, if he would have listened to reason and conscience, instead of passion. He had read the Bible and tasted—sufficiently to feel its divine power—the blessedness of following its precepts. He is described moreover as of strong and active intellect, capable of thoughtful action and fitted to command and guide his fellow-men. Taking the course he did, he must have sinned against the clear light of his better nature. We doubt whether a spirit capable of deliberately committing the crime imputed to him, could co-exist with the other qualities of John Barton's character. At least, we do not find, upon inquiry, that the men who are prominent in such social warfare as he took a leading part in, are distinguished for the humanity, the self-sacrifice and general uprightness of life with which he is represented as endowed. If the outlines of the portraiture are indeed drawn from reality, we suspect that lights and shades have been largely thrown in by the imagination of the writer.

A graver charge has been brought against the book, which must not be passed over—that it is one-sided and unfair, and places the relation of the whole class of masters to their workpeople in a false and invidious light.—We have already remarked, that the writer has taken an exceptional form of social condition as the theme of her fiction, and

attempted to express the feelings which such a crisis called forth in large masses of the population. If such feelings actually existed, and they have been truthfully represented, the story has satisfied its conditions as a work of art. It only aims at the embodiment of a great social fact. How far the sufferings endured were caused or aggravated by past or present misconduct, or were capable of alleviation by foreign aid to the extent which the sufferers themselves believed possible, may be considered as a question rather falling within the province of the social economist than capable of satisfactory treatment in the pages of a novel. Still a novel exhibits results; and it may be asked, whether those which are so vividly presented in *Mary Barton*, leave as a whole upon the mind, an impression that is correspondent with justice and truth. A strong feeling exists in many quarters, that they do not, and that a person unacquainted with Manchester would derive from the book a very erroneous idea of the amount of benevolence ever in full operation there, and of the actual relations subsisting between a vast majority of the employed and their masters.

Any one reading the book with attention, will find in the story itself some correctives of this unfavourable impression. Barton's early improvidence and that of his parents are clearly admitted, so that when he is thrown out of work by the state of the times, he has not a shilling in the world to fall back upon. This fact should have been more strongly dwelt upon, when his embittered feelings on witnessing the ravages of want in his family are so forcibly described. It ought also to have been more distinctly noticed, that it was the possession of these very qualities of foresight and thought wanting in himself, which caused the disparities of wealth and comfort that he viewed with such alienation and hate. Barton himself confesses on his death-bed, that he has mistaken the course of justice: and the sober admissions of old Job Legh, who represents the wisdom of the working-class, effectually repel the wild pretensions of Socialism, and throw the responsibility of the social elevation of the poor on their own efforts and thoughtfulness—if only (*for that is the point on which he insists, and which constitutes the true moral of the Tale*) they can meet with consideration and sympathy and fra-

ternal recognition from those who are already the possessors of wealth. The softening of the elder Carson's mind, and the more earnest devotion of his thoughts in his latter years to the improvement and happiness of the workpeople, though introduced as a collateral incident towards the close of the story, is evidently intended to intimate, that a more benevolent and enlightened spirit at the present time generally regulates the intercourse of the employers and the employed. John Barton's dying in the arms of Mr. Carson, who puts up a prayer at Mary's request, "God be merciful to us, sinners,"—is a kind of poetical justice to heal the strife of the contending parties represented by the two men, which sheds a spirit of peace on the concluding scenes of the mournful Tale. The fault seems to be, that these corrective touches are not brought out with sufficient strength. They are there, but the careless or prejudiced reader will probably overlook them. It is rather a defect in the execution than an omission in the general design. The picture wants keeping. The dark shades are laid in too deep and thick; the redeeming lights are too faint and few.

From intense interest in her subject and complete self-abandonment to it, the sympathies of the authoress are for the time perhaps too exclusively enlisted on behalf of a particular class, and dispose her to view all events too much from the one point of view in which she has placed herself. It is unfortunate for the general correctness of the impression produced by her Tale, that the only occasion on which the masters are brought on the scene, presents them in a harsh and repulsive light. The good influences at work among them, are kept in the back-ground. The conduct imputed to young Carson—ridiculing the haggard looks and tattered garments of worn-out and starving men, is unfeeling and brutal in the extreme. For the honour of humanity we are willing to believe such a case never existed; and if so—if there be no fact to authorise it—we can hardly forgive our authoress for inventing so odious a trait, since it throws an undeserved stain on the class which can be represented capable of tolerating such insolent cruelty in one of its members.

There is no community more distinguished for its large and intelligent beneficence than Manchester; and con-

spicuous among those who administer it, are its leading Manufacturers. Of course selfish and grasping men are to be found in every class, who are deterred from oppression only by the counteracting force of public opinion, and are ever foremost in efforts to reduce the rate of wages and to mar the amicable feeling and the sense of a common interest, that would naturally spring up between the capitalist and the operative. Only recently we were told of a combined movement of some of the more respectable masters with their people, to resist the avaricious encroachments of such men on the contract that is generally recognised as giving satisfaction to all parties. We have it from the lips of working men themselves, that a very different feeling now subsists between the employers and the employed from that which once prevailed, and that this improved feeling is most powerful in the younger generation; that there is no such thing as a *general* hatred between class and class; and that those who attempt to excite it, are mischievous and self-seeking men driving a trade in strife and misery.

One of the severest things we ever heard, in reference to some perverse Chartist movements in this direction, was uttered in our presence not long ago by a working man. There seems no doubt, that in Manchester this important relation between the furnishers of labour and the furnishers of capital is at present better understood by both parties, and of course productive of juster and kinder feeling; and that the general result is what every one might expect, and could not wish otherwise:—where the masters are humane, considerate and just, the men are satisfied and reasonable; where the reverse occurs, distrust and alienation are the consequence. Strict justice, fair dealing, and friendly, respectful, treatment—such as befits the intercourse of man with man—have more to do, so far as our observation, now that of many years, has extended—with the tranquil relations of masters and men, than the rate of wages, when it is clearly seen that the state of trade compels a reduction. We know a master—a man of energy and benevolence—who regards his vast establishments as an organ of his philanthropy, and whom we have heard declare—astonishing as the declaration may seem to those who are not familiar with the operations of manu-

facturing industry—that if he wished to devote himself to the moral improvement of society and to acquire the most powerful means of influencing the conduct and condition of the poor, he would put himself at the head of a well-regulated mill, to exert its civilising agencies on the masses gathered round it.

The gigantic magnitude of the manufacturing industry of South Lancashire (of which Manchester may be regarded as the capital) and the enormous masses of population to which it yields employment—have naturally attracted towards it a more than usual degree of attention. The mischiefs and abuses incidental to its first rapid development, especially in the employment of women and children, have exposed it to a searching scrutiny above every other branch of industry. Excellent effects have followed this free action of public opinion; many evils once complained of have disappeared. At the present day, there is no part of England, where, on the whole, the working people are better educated, better taken care of, and obtain a more comfortable subsistence. When a stoppage of trade occurs, their immense numbers, it is true, cause the pressure to be very severely felt. On the one hand, however, it is the ultimate tendency of a free commerce to make these checks less frequent and less violent; and, on the other, providence and economy in the people might greatly weaken their force when they come. It has been the effect of the restrictions and regulations that have been applied to the manufactures of the North, and of the supposed necessity for parliamentary interference to prevent oppression—to create in the South where all the facts are imperfectly known, a very unfavourable impression of the condition of the labouring poor in Lancashire, and to circulate a belief that society in that part of England is distracted with a perpetual feud between two hostile and implacable interests. To the superficial reader Mary Barton may seem to strengthen that impression. But it will be misunderstood, if it is so read.

God knows, enough has to be done everywhere for the conversion of our drunken, improvident, uneducated and irreligious masses into thoughtful, respectable and Christian citizens; and the agricultural and manufacturing classes cannot possibly be worse employed than in foment-

ing groundless prejudices against each other. But we would remind those connected with the rural districts, who may have taken up the idea that a manufacturing population is necessarily a wretched and degraded population—of the duty of looking at home—of the condition of the farm labourers in many southern counties—of the arbitrary and tyrannical way in which the landlord's power is often exercised over the rural population—of the ejection of whole families from their cottages in mid-winter (a case was recently on record in the papers), and of the heathenish ignorance in which, notwithstanding the increased activity of the parochial clergy, entire villages may at this day be found.

We have expressed our opinion freely about *Mary Barton*. The openness of our censure, where we have thought it deserved, may be taken as an earnest of the sincerity of our praise. It is a charming book; after every deduction, rich in wisdom and truth. It shows us, what a deep poetry may be lying hid under the outward meanness and triviality of humble life; what strong and pure affections, what heroism and disinterestedness, what high faith in God and immortality under all the sorrow and trial of a hard world, may be nursed in the homes of poor and unpolished men. We rise from its pages with a deeper interest in all our fellow-beings; with a firmer trust in their great and glorious destiny; and with a strengthened desire to co-operate with its gifted authoress and with all of kindred spirit, in every effort to ennoble and bless them.

ART. IV.—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley. By Thomas Medwin.
2 vols. post 8vo. London: T. C. Newby. 1847.

THERE is a common charm in the lives of Highwaymen, Actors, and Poets. We mean no disparagement to Poetry divine by associating as ministers of delight to man the sons of Song with the minions of the Moon; nor would we impeach Humanity as degraded and perverse for being absorbed by a bandit's adventures, as well as glowing over a Poet's loves. The fellowship is one that cannot be helped, and that brings neither glory into the Robber's Cave, nor shame into the Poet's Heaven. The knights of the road, the heroes of the boards, and the followers of the Nine, have this one thing in common with each other, the unconventionality of their several callings. Life on the road may be criminally unconventional; life on the stage, as some wrongly think, meanly unconventional; and life with the Muses nobly unconventional: yet Highwayman, Actor and Poet all live a life which men in general dare not lead, and which consequently they most delight to hear and read of as something strange, marvellous, and altogether different from their own existence. The fellowship lies in the audacity, the defiance of custom, that sends the bandit to his calling and the bard to his. For the Poet, that passionate lover of mankind, that benefactor of the world, that mighty master of the world, is by the very necessity of his nature often made a dweller in the Wilderness, a sligher, a defier of the world. To give himself up fully to the spirit within him, to utter at all fitly, in deed or in word, the passionate strength of his nature, to build up his life in harmony with his own bright, wild visions of the Fair and Perfect, demands a degree of daring which puts that of the soldier to shame, imposes on him a perpetual warfare with conventionalism of some sort; and if circumstances are very unfavourable to the free development of his nature, if outward things grow restraining and oppressive to the inner man, especially if his external position be conspicuous, he becomes a daring, struggling adventurer,

a sublime outlaw, who astonishes, shocks, or shames the world, while the story of his life is no less strong to fascinate and absorb it. The glory of the poetic existence, the intensity both of its joys and woes, its inevitable extravagances, the strange and endless variety of its outward and inward events, its contact with the world—now over-sweet, now over-sharp—furnish forth a feast extraordinary for the reading public, and provoke an everlasting, ever-growing curiosity. How emulously have biographers seized upon each mighty Poet! what a host of ministers, purveyors, even menial servants, have asked employment of his memory, volunteered their services to his fame! What a minute looking after him has there been; what a beating up of the whole earth for intelligence of him; what a gathering together of each small anecdote; what a treasuring of his pettiest peculiarity, of his strongest extravagance!

And yet scarcely any poet, as if conscious of the multitudes who would be proud to undertake the business, has taken pains to gratify this curiosity on the part of the world. Of all mighty men, the great people of Parnassus have been least given to autobiography. With the exception of Byron's suppressed Memoirs, which, from the hints he drops here and there, seems to have been the recollection of a London Lion rather than of a Poet, and of Göethe's "Truth and Poetry," a history to be expected from that elaborate self-cultivator and serene self-contemplator, we know of no autobiography perpetrated by a poet. Nor is it difficult to explain this abstinence of poets from autobiography: to them it would be but a work of supererogation; already have they again and again written their own history, left a record of their life, of what is to them at least chiefly and especially life, in the characters they have conceived, the passions they have expressed, the emotions to which they have given a voice. Why should they, the completest of all self-utterers, incessant autobiographers, sit down and waste their time in chronicling the external events of their existence,—they, the chief business of whose life has been a deeper autobiography? It may be well for historians, like Hume and Gibbon, to narrate their own lives. Men of letters have not the same let and hindrance in becoming autobiographical that poets feel. But of all dealers in autobiography, the most lavish have been men

of action, those least intimate with themselves, least studious of their inner life; the men who have led the outer movement of the world and managed its more glaring business, whatever their rank and sphere of activity has been—tyrants, generals, kings, courtiers, statesmen, patriots, cardinals, republicans, spies: Sylla, Tully, Richelieu, De Retz, Ludlow, Clarendon, Louis XIV., James II., Vidocq. From Sylla to Vidocq, from the tyrant of the Roman Republic to the master of the French Police, the men of action have delighted to dedicate their leisure to the record of their activity. And well for them that they have taken such care of their fame; for it has not been their destiny to dwell so deeply in the affections of mankind and win so many admirers to explore their history and describe their doings, as the Poets,—those mightier movers, those higher masters of ours, who have so deeply felt with Humanity, and so passionately uttered the heart of the world.

The life of no poet is thronged with deeper, more various, and more painful interest, than that of Shelley. One of the aristocracy, shunning and shunned by his order, a man of genius, cast out by his University; a soul full of aspiration, devotedness, and veneration, at war with religion as established in the world; a husband, most unfortunate in his first trial of matrimony; a father, whom the law deprived of his children; a passionate lover of his race, from whom his race recoiled: such was Shelley; such is the strange, intense, yes, terrible interest of his life. To explore the minutiae, to penetrate the depths of such a life, what a temptation to a biographer; what a treat for the world! Accordingly he has been made the subject of sketches and partial notices; but no regular biography appeared till this of Captain Medwin; an abstinence arising we presume from the reserve of her who is most able to discharge the duty. For a duty surely it is; the high place which Shelley holds in many hearts, and his commanding position in the literature of England, have long called loudly for some especial and authentic record of him. Poet-like, he has left us no autobiography, save that of his heart and soul; of his inner life, which his poems so abundantly supply. What student of the Revolt of Islam does not perceive that Laon is Shelley, with a change of cir-

cumstance? who can read *Rosalind and Helen* without recognising in *Helen's* lover the gentle, high-souled, all-loving Shelley?

Conceiving then that Shelley is entitled to some regular biography, we congratulate Captain Medwin on his perception of the duty, and offer him our cordial thanks for this endeavour to fulfil it, independently of our opinion as to the manner of its fulfilment. Before we take a brief survey of the *Life and Works of Shelley*, we will discharge our duty to his biographer, and say what we have to say on the manner in which he has executed his task.

We can conceive of no person, save Mrs. Shelley, more qualified from position for this business than Mr. Medwin. A friend and connection of Shelley's family, his playfellow and schoolfellow, the intimate of his early youth, the partner of his first literary undertakings, one of the few companions of his last years in Italy;—if, with all these advantages, he has made no very great addition to our knowledge of the facts of his friend's life, we must not impute the deficiency to any lack of diligence and painstaking on his part, but to the fulness and variety of the details which somehow or other have found their way into print, especially those contained in the copious and charming notices with which Mrs. Shelley has garnished her edition of her husband's works.

However, with what he has so carefully gathered from all who have told the world anything about Shelley, together with some striking novelties of his own contributing, he has put forth a book of great interest, which we could hardly lay down till we had reached the end. The interest of the work is heightened, too, by certain moral qualifications of Mr. Medwin, to our mind very valuable in a biographer. Shelley is in the hands of one who loves him well and appreciates him exactly, of one who has a thorough reverence and apprehension of his genius, to whom his heart and mind have been revealed in all their beauty, and all their peculiarity; who has a quick and correct eye for all "the subtle shining secrecies" of his spirit; and the position which Mr. Medwin has assumed towards his friend, that of the champion, the defender, is the most hazardous, though not the least noble, that a biographer can take up. Without wishing to lend any

countenance to the extravagance of biographical passion, now so generally cried down, we are not ashamed to confess our preference of a too fond to a too cold biographer. If "nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice" are the two golden rules in life-writing, the violation of the former is surely the far inferior evil. To us it seems that sympathy with its subject is an essential condition of successful and permanent biography. It would have been better, perhaps, had Captain Medwin been content with manifesting a general sympathy, shown less eager advocacy and fierce championship; though it must be very difficult to undertake the life of Shelley with any desire of doing him simple justice, without now and then waxing warlike. Shelley was so much of an Ishmaelite (in so far as "every man's hand was against him;" the singular gentleness of his nature, his utter incapability of hatred, would not let "his hand be against every man," kept him from the full perfection of the character) that an affectionate biographer can hardly help becoming somewhat of an Ishmaelite himself, enacting the character more completely than poor Shelley could; as the gallant captain has in fact done. He stands with a drawn sword before the memory of Shelley, doing valiant battle with all who have wronged it, and willing to encounter any reinforcement that may arrive to the detractors. He points to his friend, and says to anybody and everybody, "Strike my friend, and I strike you." Unfortunately however (and now comes our chief complaint against Mr. Medwin) the beauty of this tender and disinterested pugnacity is spoiled by a considerable mixture of more questionable stuff—of pugnacity on his own account. Not satisfied with doing battle against such as he deems the enemies of Shelley, he finds room for warfare with a few of his own, introduces now and then the poet's wrongs in connection with his own grudges, drops all on a sudden from narrative down to invective. How far Sir J. C. Hobhouse deserves the fierce onslaught in the second volume we cannot say; but we are sure that Captain Medwin would have consulted his duty and dignity as a biographer, the honour of his friend, and the value and permanence of his work, by restraining his wrath, keeping silence about his grudges, and sparing the public those demonstrations of hostility towards Moore,

Rogers and Campbell, which disfigure the middle of the second volume. What could bring Captain Medwin to stray from the plain path of biography and deviate into that savage assault on the Bard of Memory,—give fresh life and currency to a lampoon of Byron against Rogers, old and out of date, with which he has disgraced his pages—(if, indeed, the thing belongs to Byron)—not to mention the shower of witless, malignant epigrams of his own concoction, we presume, which he has rained upon the venerable poet?

In the historians of the persecuted, in those who have told the tale of the world's stricken deer to whom they have fondly clung, we look for much generous indignation, and can forgive some bitterness. Had the philosopher Diophanes of Mitylene survived to leave some record of his friend and patron, Tiberius Gracchus, or had Pomponius or Lætorius, instead of so nobly dying for Caius, escaped and written his life, we should not expect from them the calmness and impartiality with which Plutarch has set forth the fate of the two illustrious brethren, nor be very angry if they showed no mercy to their destroyers, Nasica and Opimius. To Captain Medwin, as the biographer of one of the world's stricken deer, as the friend of Shelley, we can allow some measure of vehemence and indignation; but he has almost exceeded our amplest allowance, and too often deprived his bitterness of its only grace and excuse, by diverting it from the wrongs of Shelley to his own.

While confessing the great interest of the book, acknowledging the clear apprehension which Mr. Medwin possesses of the character and writings of his friends, and the ability with which he has let us into the secret places of Shelley's genius, and traced the formation and various changes of his metaphysics, we cannot fulfil the obligations of strict critical justice, without expressing a desire that the book were not so full of clumsy and ungrammatical sentences, and inaccuracies as to facts. Of many sins of omission and commission the printer doubtless is guilty; but both author and printer have much to answer for on the score of carelessness, and we sincerely trust that a new edition will speedily enable Mr. Medwin to remove from his pages all disfigurements, whether arising from

literary haste or ill-temper. Upon the whole, however, the book is pleasantly, and sometimes finely written; when unfolding the inner life of his friend, he is almost always clear, powerful, impressive, and often eloquent. His verses, too, (he occasionally and not ungracefully introduces himself to us as a poet,) have often remarkable merit, especially a translation of a song in Calderon's *Cisma D' Ingalaterra* (vol. ii. p. 14). Two lines in his imitation of "Three poets in three distant ages born," very happily seize upon the grand distinction between Shelley and Byron, and give it with much force and terseness—

"One waged with human systems deathless strife,
War with himself consumed the other's life."

Would that Dryden had discriminated between Homer and Virgil as felicitously!

But above all we congratulate Captain Medwin again and again, upon that thorough acquaintance with the mind and heart of his friend which better than personal acquaintance and family connection entitles him to the office of biographer; upon that true and tender love which without disguising the faults of its object delights to revel in his virtues; and upon that sound critical perception and exact apprehension of his genius, which, while alive to the power and beauty manifest in all his works, discerns so unerringly where his strength chiefly lies. Not vain is that affectionate boast, "very early had I learned to penetrate into that soul sublime;" and Captain Medwin will forgive us, if, after thus much attention to himself, this earnest exaltation of what is excellent in his book, and this friendly deprecation of its less pleasing characteristics, we now give ourselves up to the contemplation of him whom he so delighteth to honour—to contemplate him, not partially, or as poet, or reformer, or husband, but in his wholeness, in all the height and breadth of his capacity, in the full extent of his energy and operation as a Power among men,—to apprehend what he was in himself, what he was to his own age, what he will be to all time.

He was born at Field Place, Sussex, August 4, 1792, in the full onward sweep of the French Revolution; of that Revolution, destined, among its more terrible offices,

to help in renovating, quickening, and purifying the weak and withered poetry of England; and to lend no faint and indirect inspiration to this offspring of the English aristocracy. He came into the world just when those elder though not mightier kings of song, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, who afterwards so passionately disowned the awful event and all its kindred, were greeting it with a deep, eager, welcome that Youth and Poetry alone could furnish, steeping their young souls in the strange, sudden splendour of the bright, fiery revelation, and tasking their spirits to follow close the happy, glorious, harmonious march of the Golden Age—the Paradise, for which Prophets and righteous men had panted, reserved for their eyes and their ears. Of the old race from which he sprang, nothing very great or note-worthy is recorded, though his grandfather, Sir Bysshe, the hero of two elopements, the wedder of two heiresses, winner of two great fortunes, was a mighty man in his own time; a man whose greedy, grasping youth was naturally enough succeeded by a sordid, covetous old age.

Sir Bysshe's first prize, Miss Mitchell, of Horsham, was the grandmother of our Shelley: his second, Miss Sidney Perry, brought him the noble domain and historic mansion of Penshurst, and mingled the poetic and patriotic blood of the Sidneys with the obscurer stream of the Shelleys. Though unallied by blood to the renowned race, yet might not Shelley boast a remarkable spiritual relationship to the two mighty men who have so diversely yet so nobly immortalised the name of Sidney? Seem not the spirits of Philip and Algernon to have in a measure met and mingled in him? might he not claim fellowship at once with the ideal of high-born gentleness, purity, and poesy, and with the stern and steadfast lover of liberty?—his the exquisite tenderness, intense unselfishness and holy courtesy that make the one so dear; and his the passionate love of truth, the impatience of every yoke, and the earnest daring of soul that make the other so reverable:—was it not in him, if, wounded, dying and athirst, he beheld a common soldier nearer death and more athirst, to have said with Philip to those who held the water to his parched lips, "Let him drink; his necessity is greater than mine,"—and had he not some right too to the

lines which Algernon wrote in the album at Copenhagen—

“Manus hæc inimica tyrannis
Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem”?

The poet's father, Sir Timothy, an ordinary country gentleman, and M.P. by any right but that of eloquence or ability, showed throughout that the parentage of a man of genius was an honour to which he was indifferent, and of which he was unworthy. Nor does Shelley seem to have possessed much more of a spiritual parent in his mother, of whom Mr. Medwin tells us very little, merely mentioning her as a clever woman and an acute observer of character; but Shelley's unearthly, starry genius seems under no obligation to her worldly cleverness; and her gift at discerning spirits was assuredly not successfully employed, where such precious and glorious employment offered itself, upon the deep, beautiful, yet awful spirit of her son, who neither felt nor acknowledged anything of that mighty debt which so many men of genius have owed to their mothers, and which they have been so proud to confess. He stands forth a sort of poetic Melchizedec, without father, without mother; his poetry never breathes the air of home, borrows nothing from that fountain of pleasant inspiration, hardly indulges in one *comfortable* image, most faithfully reflects the grand forlornness and homelessness of his life. He carried nothing with him from home but a deep delight in the affection of his sisters, and an earnest appreciation of that most fair and exquisite tie, which the heart even of the comfortable and not very tender Gibbon longed after; and doubtless the exceeding gentleness and tenderness which made so much the charm of Shelley's character, were favoured and confirmed by the exclusive companionship of sisters—the circumstance which has most power to master and subdue the fierce energy and rude selfishness of boys.

“From the caresses of his sisters,” Shelley passed in his eleventh year, to the scene where the harsh peculiarities of boyish nature are so vigorously manifested—a large private boarding school at Sion House, near Brentford—one of those places known now by the pompous style of

Seminaries, and rapidly sinking into impotence and insignificance; giving way to the renovated virtue and efficacy of Grammar Schools, to the fresh youth and new-born energy of Proprietary Schools. According to Mr. Medwin, who was his companion here, Sion House was anything but a scholastic Elysium, anything but a bright green spot, where the doves gathered round the young poet and strewed over him fresh leaves and flowers; but rather a close hot nest where a swarm of hornets beset the bright, young butterfly. What with a choleric, though somewhat able master, a stingy housekeeper, coarse, vulgar schoolmates, and a partial system of fagging, Shelley knew nothing of that merry life which is so singularly assumed to be the invariable lot of schoolboys, as if Shakespeare and the experience of most men had not pronounced this character to be mere flattery and delusion.

"Love goes towards Love as schoolboys from their books,
But Love from Love, toward school with heavy looks."

School time was no glad, bright breach in the uncheerfulness of the sad poet's life, as the poetic temperament suffers most keenly from the bleak air and cutting blasts of school-life. For the strange spirit of poetry was already alive and stirring within him, if not struggling into utterance; yet in him the Poet did not harm the Scholar so much as in many it has done. Mr. Medwin says,—

"The dead languages were to him as bitter a pill as they had been to Byron; yet he acquired them as it were intuitively and seemingly without study; for, during school hours, he was wont to gaze at the passing clouds—all that could be seen from the lofty window which his desk fronted—or watch the swallows as they flitted past, with longings for their wings; or would scrawl in his school-books, a habit he always continued, rude drawings of pines and cedars, in memory of those on the lawn of his native home. On these occasions our master would sometimes peep over his shoulder, and greet his ears with no pleasing salutation."

Like all gifted boys, Shelley, while discharging the task-work of school, instinctively took care of his own peculiar gift, understood the cravings of his own intellectual

life, and diligently sought the food which was to make his special genius grow and thrive. This fare consisted chiefly of extravagant romances, and tales of wonder and horror, which inflicted upon him that bitterest curse of childhood, broken rest and horrible dreams. The tasks unloved, but executed—the devoured romance, the intense reverie, the harsh preceptor, the unsympathizing and too often oppressive boys, the avoided play-ground, the solitary walk, the stroll with his single friend and future biographer—such was Shelley's life at Sion House, of which Mr. M. says, "So much did we mutually hate Sion House, that we never alluded to it in after-life." By the way, the dancing-master could make nothing of Shelley, quite gave him up in despair. This dweller with so many of the Muses showed from the first an utter indifference to the most popular of the Nine, would have nothing to do with Terpsichore.

Mr. Medwin does not mention the year when Shelley passed from Sion House to Eton, where he fought the first of his many battles against human systems: fagging was the first tyranny against which his native abhorrence of oppression set him in opposition. He would not inflict, and he would not suffer the tyranny. His strange, sad martyr-life was begun. But while the Martyr was practising his powers of endurance here, the Sceptic was gaining strength, feeding on his appropriate food, revelling in Lucretius and drawing nourishment from Pliny the Elder, part of whose *Natural History* he translated. From Shelley alone could we expect any minute history of the rise and progress of his quarrel with Religion; but it is possible to form some idea of the growth of his unbelief, which arose in a measure from the very earnestness and activity of his intellect: yes, almost from his very philanthropy. He looked out anxiously, inquiringly, passionately upon life, earlier than it is good for man so to look; asked deep and awful questions of all things before he had lived long enough to win adequate and soul-satisfying replies; in the very rawness and impotence of youth plunged into the depths of things, and sounded the mysteries of being. The prematureness and haste of his spirit brought him, unfurnished and unprepared, face to face with life and its many mysteries, truth and its many manifestations. Who can won-

der, then, that without, as far as we know, the support of any special religious education, he was perplexed at the strange things that thronged upon his young vision, confounded by the awful Presences into which he had been hurried? that he saw dimly, confusedly, erroneously; brought away crude, imperfect notions? Religion, too, seems never to have come before him but in its worldly aspect; it appeared to him as a public power, not as a power in the soul, as an individual ministration; he beheld in it but an establishment, an institution, sometimes corrupt, now and then oppressive. He had probably known nothing of it at home, seen it not at all in its sweetness and beauty there, as ruler of hearts and consciences, as glorifier of life. Political parsons were thick around; he heard of the Church as an Estate of the Realm, as a good means of worldly advancement, or profitable investment for talent. Disinterested guardianship this of Truth! thought the young indignant seeker; the pure, precious, orient diamond Truth dwell amidst this Mammon-glare! that awful starry Power reside with this comfortable convenient establishment, consign herself to the keeping of hired and seven-fold prejudiced intellect! Thus was born and thus grew the unbelief, the Atheism, of this earnest inquirer, this passionate philanthropist, this, in a sense, most spiritual of poets. It was this fearful and importunate spirit of inquiry that urged him on to science, made a chemist of him while at Eton and Oxford, prompted his early tale of the Rosicrucian, the offspring of St. Leon, and it may be the faint foreshadowing of Zanon, and engaged him in anonymous correspondence with all sorts of persons,—chemists, bishops, young ladies,—on all sorts of subjects, physics, metaphysics, religion. Mrs. Hemans, then a girl, exchanged some letters with him. The author of Shelley at Oxford, says; "The transition from physics to metaphysics was gradual. Is the electric fluid material?—he would ask his correspondent. Is light? Is the vital principle in vegetables—in the human soul?" How similar is the form that all strong intellectual curiosity takes, however differently directed! how often do young, earnest students coincide in the manifestation of their ardour, however far apart their fields of study may lie! Shelley does not at once remind us of Gibbon; the name of the passionate poet does not sug-

gest that of the mocking historian; yet the young scholar of Lausanne was as importunate in seeking solution for *his* doubts, and confirmation for *his* conjectures, as the youthful philosopher of Eton and Oxford; Gibbon was no less resolute in besetting Crevier, Breitinger, Gesner, and other renowned scholars, with epistles on the interpretation of a difficult passage in the Classics, and the emendation of a corrupt one, on the date of the death of Catullus and the person to whom Horace dedicated a poem, than was Shelley in addressing pillars of the Church and luminaries of Science, on the nature of light, and the essence of the soul.

But in another and very strange and striking manner are these two so diversely mighty men allied; they both provoked the wrath of their common University, and were both rejected by her. True it is; the greatest of our historians and one of the greatest of our poets were the castaways of Oxford. She has no pride and fellowship in their fame; their glory, instead of glorifying her, casts some shame upon her, at least in the case of Gibbon. But if there is something singular in this community of rejection, how passing is the strangeness, how extreme our astonishment, when we compare the causes of each expulsion with the future life and intellectual development of each castaway! For going over to Rome, Gibbon was renounced by Magdalen; for circulating his pamphlet on "The Necessity of Atheism," Shelley was ousted from University College. From the votary of indiscriminate belief, who would have expected the calmest, most cautious, sagacious, and elaborate of historians?—or from the devotee of unbelief, the most aspiring and passionate of poets? The martyr of Rome subsided into the subtle sneerer at Christianity; the martyr of Atheism glowed and dilated into the most spiritual and ethereal of bards.

It is impossible not to regret and deprecate that haste and impatience of spirit, that fierce eagerness to defy and provoke authority, that exaggerated sense of the duty of self-utterance, which urged Shelley, not yet nineteen, into the printing and circulation of the pamphlet on "The Necessity of Atheism;" and it would be unjust to censure vehemently the conduct of his University in rejecting an avowed Atheist, founded as it was by Christianity, and for

the support of Christianity, and entered through an acknowledgment of Christianity; yet argument and remonstrance might have preceded expulsion, at least the final doom might have been much less roughly dealt. Mr. Medwin quotes the following account of the scene from those most able and charming papers, "Shelley at Oxford:"—

"It was a fine Spring morning on Lady Day in the year 1811 (Shelley had been at Oxford scarcely six months, having entered University College October 1810) when I went to Shelley's rooms. He was absent; but before I had collected our books, he rushed in. He was terribly agitated. I anxiously inquired what had happened, 'I am expelled,' he said, as soon as he had recovered himself a little,—'I am expelled. I was sent for suddenly a few minutes since: I went to the common room, where I found our Master and two or three of his fellows. The Master produced a copy of the little syllabus, and asked me if I was the author of it: he spoke in a rude, abrupt, and insolent tone. I begged to be informed for what purpose they put the question: no answer was given; but the master loudly and angrily repeated—'Are you the author of this book?' 'If I can judge from your manner,' I said, 'you are resolved to punish me if I should acknowledge that it is my work. If you can prove that it is, produce your evidence; it is neither just nor lawful to interrogate me in such a case and for such a purpose. Such proceedings would become a Court of Inquisitors, but not free men in a free country.'" "Do you choose to deny that this is your composition?" the Master reiterated in the same rude and angry voice."

"Shelley complained much of his violent and ungentleman-like deportment, saying, 'I have experienced tyranny and injustice before, and I well know what virulence is, but I never met with such unworthy treatment. I told him calmly, but firmly, that I was determined not to answer any questions respecting the book on the table. He immediately repeated his demand; I persisted in my refusal, and he said furiously, "Then you are expelled; and I desire that you will quit the college to-morrow morning at the latest." One of the fellows took up two papers; he handed me one of them. Here it is.' He produced a regular sentence of expulsion, drawn up in due form under the seal of the college."

Such was the issue of his first conflict with the power and dignity of the world: an issue which assured the

sadness of his life and the nobleness of his poetry. This expulsion brought along in its train alienation from his home, and failure in his first love; and thereby indirectly led the way to his first most unfortunate trial of matrimony. But instead of weakening his principles, it confirmed them; instead of quenching, it kindled his spirit. This slaying of his peace and marring of his life was to be the stirring and quickening of his genius: he, like so many of his brethren, was destined to be a pain-perfected poet. As the scorn of the Edinburgh Review wrought bitterly but invigoratingly upon Byron, raised the weakling into a mighty bard, so did the sentence of Oxford call forth the strength with the indignation of her cast-away, confirmed his genius in the service of the principles for which he had been expelled; and if it did not originate *Queen Mab* (begun some time before), certainly bestowed upon the poem its peculiar tendency and power. The poetry that he had before perpetrated (he had taken Mr. Medwin as his partner in a poetical romance as the Wandering Jew, and scattered some rhymes over his tale of the Rosicrucian) did not rise much above the ordinary feeble imitativeness of juvenile verses, and was of kin to his after-productions in nothing but in wildness and unearthiness of subject and manner. But wrong roused him, persecution operated as usual: the youthful martyr all at once became the passionate, eloquent utterer of aspiring Atheism, philanthropic revolution, and benevolent subversion. What a strange spectacle! Youth, Passion, Poetry, Ideality, in league with Atheism. One of the fire-breathing, immortal steeds rushing through the Universe yoked to a lumber waggon, instead of bearing the chariot of the Sun round the heavens! On what a spiritual conception does *Queen Mab* itself rest! Is not that strange poem the visions and adventures of a disembodied soul?

Before Shelley left Oxford, he was approaching to such spirituality as his vehemently independent and somewhat insubordinate soul could endure—such as lay unappropriated by any existing Establishment or Sect. Weary of the gloom of Atheism and Materialism, he was drawing near to the Platonic radiance, turning from Scotch mists and French flats to the glorious heights and skies divine

of Greece, and after his splash in the muddy, shallow pond of Hume and Diderot, was making ready for a plunge into the deep, star-lit ocean of Plato.

Doubtless, as Mr. Medwin and Mr. Hogg (the memorialist of Shelley at Oxford) affirm, his expulsion retarded this advance to a kinder and nobler philosophy; and not only by doubly endearing the odious principles and arousing all his powers in their behalf, but inasmuch as it estranged his family, severed him from his first love, prepared him to rush into an unhappy marriage, and thus hurried him into sharp and premature collision with the pains of poverty and all the cares and miseries of the outer and inner life. Mr. Medwin says—

“ I have found a clue to develop the mystery of how he became acquainted with Miss Westbrook. The father, who was in easy circumstances, kept an hotel in London, and sent his daughter to a school at Balam Hill, where Shelley's second sister made one of the boarders. It so happened that as Shelley was walking in the garden of this seminary, she passed them. She was a handsome blonde, not then sixteen. Shelley was so struck with her beauty, that after his habit of writing, as in the case of Felicia Brown and others, to ladies who interested him, he contrived through the intermediation of his sister, to carry on a correspondence with her. The intimacy was not long in ripening. The young lady was nothing loth to be wooed, and after a period of only a few weeks, it was, by a sort of knight-errantry, that Shelley carried her off from Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square, where she sorely complained of being subject to great oppression from her sister and father. Whether this was well or ill-founded, is little to the purpose to inquire. Perhaps Shelley and Miss Harriett Westbrook—there might have been some magic in the name of Harriett (the name of his first love, Miss Grove)—had not met half-a-dozen times before the elopement; they were totally unacquainted with each other's dispositions, habits, or pursuits, and took a rash step that none but a boy and girl would have taken. Well might it be termed an ill-judged and ill-assorted union; bitter were destined to be its fruits.”

The bitterness, as we said above, was both external and internal, embraced alike soul and circumstances. Marriages made in heaven are not generally celebrated at Gretna Green; and Shelley's, which took place there, October 1811, certainly does nothing to impress upon such weddings a celestial character. Wandering from one

sweet spot to another is with most wedded pairs the peculiar occupation of the honeymoon: Shelley's whole married life was a perpetual progress of this sort, though anything but a perpetual *honeymoon*. Here, settling down loses all its force and propriety as a synonyme for marrying. After a trip to Edinburgh, a hasty return to London and a few weeks' residence there, Shelley sought to combine beauty of scenery and cheapness of living at the Lakes. Lack of means, however, drove the couple thence, and he was tempted to try what he thought the superior cheapness of Ireland. An excursion to Killarney was followed by some obscure literary undertakings and political agitating in Dublin, the possible consequences of which latter course drove him to the Isle of Man; but a few weeks tired him of that city of refuge, and he pitched his tent for a year in Wales, whence he removed to London, in 1813, and in the spring of 1814 the separation took place. Certainly if, like most ladies, Mrs. Shelley had an attachment to the comforts of a quiet, settled home, this singular Arab life must have strongly inclined her to a separation, which, according to Mr. Medwin, took place by common consent, though from his rapid narrative of the affair,* and from the suicide, that sad sequel of the separation, the eagerness of Shelley for the parting seems much greater, and his conduct throughout far more censurable than that of his wife. The reaction from the indiscriminate and almost crushing severity with which this great delinquency was at first visited, has naturally brought about as faulty a leniency of judgment, an eager extenuation of this most serious desertion of duty. He parted from her on the plea of mental and moral dissonance—the very plea on which Milton grounded his stately, solemn, and most spiritual argument for divorce—the very idea that inspired his mighty lamentation over the sore bondage of reluctant souls tied together, over the woes of combined discord and copulated hate. But how differently did the two poets endure their matrimonial infelicity! The wife who a month after marriage forsook Milton, and gave no heed to repeated solicitations to return,—who forsook him in the prosperity of her party and the ad-

* Vol. I. p. 197.

versity of his,—who stubbornly kept away for two years, nor sought reconciliation but from gross selfishness, till her cause was down, and her friends in trouble,—this most unworthy woman was forgiven—forgiven at once, altogether and for ever. A sublime piece of Christian magnanimity, an illustrious victory over self, in exact accord with his noble and harmonious life, but which even fond biographers and devout admirers have but slightly dwelt upon, and inadequately glorified. Shelley after a union of nearly three years, years doubtless of much and various unhappiness, discarded his wife, evidently and almost avowedly for the lady whom he afterwards married.* (Compare Medwin, Vol. I. p. 197, with p. 213.)

The fault here is indeed the great lack of Shelley's life, that want of self-government, that absolute *αυτονομία*, or rather lawlessness, that absence of rule and order in his soul, that extreme insubordination of spirit, which alone kept him from the height for which he was meant, and made the beauty of his nature often mere rich waste. The strange mixture in him of self-sacrifice and self-indulgence is explained we think by this lawlessness and insubordination. He gave himself wholly up to his nature, and followed it whithersoever it led him. Thus, while a passionate lover and would-be helper of humanity, willing and eager to make great sacrifices of almost every kind for the advancement of men, he was yet in the habit of gratifying all his desires, whatever they might be; and not only gratified them, but rushed on to their gratification, made haste to be happy. His was a beautiful, not a well-ordered nature: and his life appears a congregation of rich fancies and bright thoughts heaped together and mingled with unwelcome ingredients, rather than what Milton thought every true poet should strive to be, and what his own life eminently was, "a true poem, that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourablest things." Poor Shelley lacked the principle from which alone could spring the sublime poem of a great life. What Art is to the poem, Religion is to the life; for as the subtle bidding and far foresight of Art directs without repressing genius, exacts

* What aggravates the desertion is, that it took place when she was far advanced in pregnancy.—Vol. I. p. 200.

full service from every power without making it too prominent, draws forth its utmost activity, yet compels it to exactest and most harmonious subordination, calls upon Imagination for all its riches, and spends the mighty sum without rushing into any extravagance or committing the least waste, provides fit place and appropriate employment for all the wealth of Memory, all stores of Learning, while it never suffers their cumbrous attendance or ostentatious presence, holds nothing back while it throws nothing away, and thus grandly builds up the magnificent and symmetrical pile of a mighty Poem;—so is the spirit of Religion, the idea of a Being altogether and immeasurably above ourselves, but towards whom we would ever stretch and strive, the constructive power in life; so does it gather all energies into one mighty force, one harmonious movement, directs the whole glory of the soul upon certain ends, makes it an orderly instead of a disorderly magnificence, teaches it a divine subordination, suffers no grace and beauty of nature to stand alone and unsupported, but establishes among them all a sure dependency and close alliance, unites all freedom with all regularity of agency, exalts life into a poem, stately, harmonious, noble in its conduct, noble in its ending. Such surely was not Shelley; he had not the art, he could not produce the poem. His life was but a passionate strain—a strain wild, and strange, and sad, and sweet. His moral energy in itself not small, a wild independent force, served apart from the moral force of the Universe, receiving orders only from its frail self, and assailing evil merely at its own discretion. His nature was the perfection of insubordination, manifested all the sanctity possible to lawlessness, all the beauty compatible with anarchy.

This vehement haste, insubordination, and impatience of spirit, this hurry into action, this rush into enjoyment, accompanied Shelley throughout life, and explains very much of its sadness. He made reckless, needless and unseemly haste to manifest to the world the Atheist of eighteen; made a rush into matrimony; made a rush out of matrimony to hurry into a connection with the lady who became his second wife, and with whom immediately after the separation in the spring of 1814, he darted into France and Switzerland to return as hastily from the lack

of means ; and after nearly two years spent in England, in London, in Devonshire, and near Windsor Forest, the birth-place of his exquisite *Alastor*, sought the continent again in 1816, and sojourned with Byron beside Lake Lemán, where the marvellous and most spiritual Hymn to Intellectual Beauty was inspired ; hastened back to England in the August of the same year, to be wrung during his year's sojourn therein by the suicide of his wife, and the loss of his children by the sentence of Lord Eldon ; and to produce while at Marlow, in the spring and summer of 1817, the *Revolt of Islam*, originally and more beautifully and meaningly entitled, *Laon and Cythna, or the Revolution of the Golden City*, that most singular political and spiritual romance, and, after the mighty model itself, our most magnificent poem in Spenser's stanza. The various sadness arising from the suicide, the Chancery suit, the breach with his family, and his own perpetual ill-health, in the early part of 1818 drove him from England again and for ever. The four last years of his life were outwardly but a posting from one town of Italy to another ; from Milan to Pisa, Leghorn, and Florence ; thence to Venice and Lord Byron ; then to Rome and Naples, where *Prometheus Unbound* was begun ; back to Rome, where *Prometheus* was finished, and the *Cenci* written ; then again to Florence, and at last to Pisa, in or about which city he tarried for some time, and not far wherefrom it was his lot to die.

Such was the outward life of Shelley, a life seemingly in very many things most pleasant to lead, the very life that a poet would choose, and pray, and pant for—a passing from one divine spot to another, a going from glory to glory—a study and contemplation of the manifold beauty of the earth, in the company too for the most part of an intensely loving and entirely sympathising soul, and that, a woman. In how much had he not his own will and way ? He dwelt with the glory of Nature and Art ; he won the peerless mate ; realised the ideal poetic life, which he glorified too by countless offices of love to man, deeds of glorious and almost extravagant beneficence. From such an outer life should we not imagine that there would flow an inner life, if not of deep joy and rapture, at least of some peace, pleasantness and splendour ? True, he had erred and suffered ; had provoked the world, and been

injuriously treated by the world; enmity and detraction pursued him; yet from such a dwelling, with such a companion, amidst such gracious deeds of his, might he not have gathered some strength, calmness and repose, looked down upon the world with some cheerfulness, security and comfort? and, as in the possession of much whercof it could not deprive him, might he not sometimes have smiled at its pursuit, and loftily bade it do its worst? Alas! alas! such power, such peace, was never his; there was that within him that would not let him rest, would not suffer him to be happy. The beauty amidst which he dwelt inspired, but blessed him not. The poet was perfected while the man continued sad; and never could the power of his soul, the glory of his genius, become spirit-cheer for him. This deep pain and sadness no doubt arose partly from the very glory of his frame, the intensity of the poetical temperament, the exceeding fineness of his make, and the fearful sympathy of the flesh with the spirit. Mr. Medwin says:—

“So sensitive was he of external impressions, so magnetic, that I have seen him after threading the crowd in the Lung d’Arno Corso, throw himself half fainting into a chair, overpowered by the atmosphere of evil passions in that sensual and unintellectual crowd.”—*Vol. II. p. 46.*

But this peculiarity of temperament taken together with his bad health, is not sufficient to account for that deep and invincible cheerlessness which seems so seldom to have forsaken him. Strange to say, the reckless bigot will almost without a thought urge in scorn and triumph the very same explanation of this sadness which a gentle philosopher, a mighty master of the human heart, will after patient study of this sad, sweet soul, lovingly and pittingly assign, his lack of Religion. To a spirit like Shelley’s, intensely tender, awfully sympathetic, pierced by every wrong of Humanity, appropriating all the woe of the world, stricken with mortal sin and sorrow, earnest for their extinction, passionate for man’s redemption, as very few souls have been;—for such a spirit mighty and special indeed was the need of some Religion, of a looking upward to some Being infinitely holier and stronger than poor evil man, of a resting in an Almighty Lover and an

Eternal Providence. Most wisely has it been said, "The only resource for a man without faith, is to be also without love," and here the mighty lover was a lack-faith. The mourner over all the woes of humanity, the would-be redresser of all its wrongs, felt no connection with a Divine Consoler and All-Righteous Rewarder—stood apart solitary and forlorn—unable to fall back into the embrace of the Almighty Lover. This sad and stricken soul could gather no strength and cheer from the Man of Sorrows, nor tread his own thorny path more pleasantly and hopefully for the footsteps of such a Forerunner.

Shelley only wanted the sublime power to utter from the heart, with Marcus Aurelius and the humblest Christian, "I will trust in the Disposer," to attain to something of their peace and blessedness. His sorrow was, that he could not attain to the conception of a Great Disposer in whom to trust. He had contrived to separate the ideas of Love and Power; to set the idea of Beneficence in opposition to that of the Supreme Force; to conceive of Love as waging eternal war with Sovereign Might; he delighted chiefly in the conception of a tyrannic Almightiness and an insurgent Philanthropy. To the setting forth of this anarchic Theology he devoted his genius. His works are the gradual glorification of it. In *Queen Mab*, we recognise a rude, vehement endeavour to express it. In the *Revolt of Islam*, it appears in fuller stature, long drawn out. *Laon and Cythna* are the holy anarchists, the lovers of man in conflict with the faith and supreme force of the World. But *Prometheus Unbound* is the master utterance of this strange Theology; presents us with the conception in full maturity and all possible splendour and perfectness; sets before us Shelley's consummate Hero, his highest idea of excellence—a Being of infinite love at war with a Being of infinite power—the supreme Lover of man oppressed by the supreme Ruler of man; oppressed because of his love of us, stricken but invincible, true to the love that woke Almighty hate, nor loth to spend an immortality of agony for his grace to man. How intensely tender towards Humanity! how fiercely disdainful of Jove! sovereign in self-sacrifice, sovereign in defiance. Many have been struck with a likeness between Prometheus and Christ. Some have even exalted the

Titan into a type of the Saviour, beheld in the fable of Prometheus a faint promise and foreshowing of the fact of Jesus. As men had a divine lover in Christ, so had they in Prometheus; as the Lord gave gifts unto men, and suffered for men, so did the Titan. Caucasus has been compared with Calvary, and the Vulture and the Rock interpreted as a prophecy of the Cross. But with all this variety of similitude, there is a huge chasm between their spiritual positions. The principle from which flowed the life of Christ stands in direct antagonism to the idea which inspired the fable of Prometheus. Jesus came to man from God; Prometheus rises up for man in defiance of Jove. The one worked for the salvation of mankind in harmony with Almighty Power, in fulfilment of the Eternal Will; the other gives gifts, pours blessing upon Humanity, utterly against the will, in direct contempt of the command, of the Supreme Ruler. The Saviour united the uttermost of love and self-sacrifice for man, with the uttermost of love and obedience to God; Prometheus combined all conceivable tenderness and self-immolation for those beneath him, with all imaginable hate and disobedience towards Him above him.

In comparing Prometheus with Milton's Satan (idea with idea, no longer idea with fact, as in the case of Jesus), we find the Titan as widely separated in spiritual position from the Fiend as from the Son, yet half related to the former as to the latter; occupying Christ's position towards man, and Satan's towards God; as much a stranger to the fell malignity and deadly selfishness of the Tempter, as to the entire and glad obedience of the Son of God; one with the Saviour in intense love for human mortals, one with the Arch-Enemy in fierce resistance to Almighty Power.

No wonder that Shelley was at once caught and captivated by this conception. We can imagine his delight when he first made acquaintance with the divine fable of Æschylus, when he found that he had not to create his ideal Being, but beheld it in all the fulness of its sad and sublime beauty, ready for his embrace, preserved and glorified for him by the immortal genius of Greece from awful and magnificent traditions of the primeval world, that most Olden Time; and we could almost believe that his

exceeding admiration and passion for the Greek Drama originated from his delight in the spiritual peculiarity of Prometheus. With what rapture must he have appropriated the conception, lent his own genius to aggrandise and glorify the idea of Æschylus, cast himself into the soul of the old Dramatist, blending his own therewith, to gladden the world with a mighty issue from the mighty mingling; and endeavoured, and not vainly, after an alliance of immortality with the great Athenian: for shall it not come to pass that few will glow over Prometheus Bound, and deplore the missing members of the magnificent Trilogy, without blessing Shelley for his brave endeavour to repair the world's loss, and rejoicing indeed in Prometheus Unbound? It is the most original of all emanations, the most independent of all structures built on another's foundations; the only truly great and sublime continuation of another's thought that we know of. But this adoption, this appropriation of Prometheus, is not only remarkable as indicative of his spiritual taste, as giving us his ideal of excellence, but should be noted and dwelt upon as his almost solitary poetical adoption, as constituting nearly the whole connection of his poetry with that of the Past, forming well-nigh the single breach in that perfect isolation and independence which so specially signalise his strains. He is sovereignly, sadly, awfully original—in our mind, the most original of all bards. No poems of any age seem to us such pure outpourings of the poet's own, so entirely drawn from himself, from his inmost soul, less built upon experience, more independent on history, less tinged with the colour of the age, the hue of contemporary thought. The stream of his genius flowed on lonely and melancholy, with scarcely a tributary, swollen by none of the neighbour rivers, fed only by the far-off waters of the Greek Tragedy and the Platonic Philosophy. The depth and entireness of Shelley's originality has a strange loneliness and sorrow in it, pierces us like something sharp and painful. We can feel other poets to be original, without feeling them to be forlorn; rejoice in the gift, without pitying them for it. Apart from and above individual men, they yet remind us of Humanity, retain a cheerful fellowship therewith, hold in all fulness and clearness, give forth in all power and

splendour, celestial thoughts and divine visions, the dim and humble likeness whereof may be enjoyed by the feeblest of us; win us by the cheerfulness of their originality, make us at home in their most solemn rapture and sublimest ecstasy; are indeed mightily above us rather than utterly apart from us. But most men would feel Shelley not only high above their puny elevation, but uncomfortably distant from them—far, far away from all their homely, earthly, cheerful sympathies; and we can fancy him sadly uttering to one of the race he loved so well, whom he was vainly wishing to move, the plaint of the shade of Keats's Lorenzo to Isabel—

“ But thou art distant in Humanity.”

An old lady-friend of ours uttered, we think, a profound criticism when she said that, to her, Shelley's poetry seemed neither of Earth nor Heaven nor Hell, but of some region differing from all, and whereof he is the single inhabitant. There resides in his strains no bliss celestial, no comfort terrestrial, no malignity infernal; he brings with him neither airs from Heaven nor blasts from Hell, nor fresh breezes from mother earth; but strange gales from some bright, fair, far off, beautiful, yet mournful Spirit-land. In no golden realm, no fairy-land of poets' peopling, can we place him; not in the painless, pleasureless region to which Dante dooms holy heathens, the gracious souls, the mighty spirits born too soon for Christ, or in any of the manifold divisions of the Florentine Purgatory. Shelley belongs to some uncheerful Hades and country of disembodied souls bright with light, yet not with glad lustre, not with sunshine—unvisited of angels and of God: where the dwellers, though not evil, are forlorn—no Paradise, no sweet celestial city, but yet a Spirit-land. For, strange as it may sound to many ears, Shelley was the most *spiritual* of all poets; one who drew most entirely from his own soul, dwelt almost wholly with thoughts, and but slightly with things; who gathered least inspiration from objects around and most from ideas, cast himself most utterly away from earth and its business, from man and his passions, to plunge into the depths of Being; sang most like a disembodied soul, made so much of the things of the spirit as to reverse the old poetic wont and illustrate the

Actual by the Spiritual, instead of employing the Actual as an illustration of the Ideal. This spirituality did not merely reside in his conceptions, but possessed and permeated his imagery, breathed itself in his light, airy, unearthly numbers, created the wild, strange, inexpressible harmony of his versification.

The philosophy, too, with which Shelley allied his genius, the Platonism which inspired so much of his later poetry, allured this most spiritual of bards, as the most ideal and spiritual of all Theologies, as too refined and abstract to gather around it worldly interests, to have played any great part in history, to be anything more than delight and worship of certain very high souls in all ages; possessed infinitely more attraction for him than the Christianity which had hardened into creeds and created institutions for which Establishments professed to exist, and over which Sects did battle.

Yes! the seeming contradiction, the deep truth, must be uttered; this shrinker from religion, this detester of faith, this almost denier of God, was the most spiritual poet that ever sung. The life of this erring, gracious, mournful, lofty soul, at once puts shame upon Christian men, and brings Christianity glory; while conveying a rebuke to the public and professed religion of the time, it indirectly bears marvellous witness in behalf of the inward spirit of Faith. The public Christianity of the age stands rebuked and abashed, convicted of impotence, that it could not win this noble creature, that it could not enter into this most spiritual poet, that it could furnish forth no banquet for a heart so noble, affections so mighty, aspirations so intense, love so passionate, self-sacrificing and universal, for a soul so much divine. But how do the power and glory of Faith, the divine spirit of Christianity, stand forth vindicated and magnified by the utterly sad and cheerless life of him, the starry unbeliever, the august antagonist, of him whom many gifts of fortune, the glory of a marvellous intellect, and the joy of its perpetual exercise, a life chiefly spent, as poets think it most sweetly spent, in the contemplation and study of the beautiful of nature and art, companionship of a lofty and sympathising soul, a most loving and noble-minded woman, the possession of a most tender and noble heart,—sweet,

self-rewarding toils of an unwearied beneficence—whom all these mighty gifts and blessings had no power to rescue from a deep and incessant woe, failed utterly to help to even a slight taste of that boundless peace and joy which have been the glory of the meanest and most ignorant believer, have blessed the most forlorn, world-oppressed, and sorrow-stricken Christian !

If it is no very great matter for surprise that his own generation shrank from Shelley, and did battle with its ardent lover ; that, scared by his fierce, all-defying, and threatening attitude towards all that it held most precious and holy, it did not penetrate to the beauty of his nature, and let the Atheist obscure the painful seeker and glowing worshipper of truth ; neither is it so much to be wondered at, that the anger of his own generation has become the sorrow of the next, that the suspicion and aversion of the age has already softened into pity, and risen into tenderness. The world, according to its tardy wont, has at last discovered its lover, and is beginning to return his love ; and among the mighty spirits who have won and will keep the eye of the ages, upon no one will it be more earnestly, curiously, wonderingly bent than upon Shelley—upon him, so marvellous a poet, so singular as a spiritual potentate, so mighty as a sorrower, so deeply interesting as a man ; upon him, early-great, early-wise, early-sad, early-gone, with such a strange wild charm clinging to his life, nor absent from his death—whose whole life belonged to woe, yet who knew nothing of life beyond youth ; who dwelt so entirely on the spiritual, yet found not God ; who loved his race so well, yet departed unloved of men. With so many rich, rare, mighty, immortal created beings to study and gather wisdom, from the world has now a fair, yet most mournful novelty presented to its gaze, has to contemplate its loving Rebel, its pure Anarch, its spiritual Atheist. Christianity will take more lively heed to the corruptions which alienated such virtue ; and rejoice more deeply in that divine spirit which alone was wanting to perfect such goodness and remove such sorrow.

The sad grace of his sojourn will drop another charm upon the divine soil of Italy—steeped as it is in all such allurements, will make it still more of a pilgrim land. The mighty Mediterranean, battle-field of so many navies,

destroyer of such multitudes, will gather new majesty and awfulness from the death that the sad poet found in its bosom ; and Rome will be yet more Rome, yet more the City of the Soul, still more the Holy ground of beauty in tears, and glory desolate, for the grave which it has given to Shelley.

ART. V.—ITALY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

Italy in the Nineteenth Century, contrasted with its Past Condition. By James Whiteside, Q.C. Three vols. London. 1848.

WE cannot speak very highly of these volumes. They are the work of an amiable man, with an intellect sharpened by professional exercise, thrown accidentally upon a country of which he had no previous knowledge beyond that which educated men cannot escape, and of whose most characteristic features nature seems to have endowed him but scantily with the organs of appreciation. He has actually amplified the scheme on which Miss Taylor wrote her graceful and instructive Letters to a younger Sister, filling his pages with the historical and biographical details of a former time, without the excuse that justified the earlier production, that it was designed to fill a vacant place among the means and instruments of elementary education. The tourist is under a strong temptation to annex history to travel, and the temptation will be in an inverse ratio to his previous acquaintance with the country he visits. New knowledge gained among all the accessories which give zest to the mind and freshness to the draught has something of an intoxicating quality, and the new ideas and emotions are impatient to deliver themselves, in that prodigality of sympathy which is apt to accompany unwonted happiness. Nothing is more natural than that a traveller in any Italian city should feel an intense curiosity respecting its earlier history, and should devote the many hours in which he must be deprived of the pleasanter occupation of observing Nature, Art, and living manners, to the acquisition of such knowledge. And nothing is more natural than that, ravished with this fresh delight, he should burn to share his joy, and in his "book" tack on his recent historical studies to his, not more recent, personal experience. We have had many late examples of this meeting of the Past and the Present in the same sheets, and none with a very happy result. The union is a forced

one, and, as has been said of the mixture of wine and water, though here indeed no mixture takes place, is apt to spoil two good things. The historical knowledge is hastily got up, and as hastily radiated off again, conveying the impressions of the receiver, often coloured by some present purpose, the quality and the condition of the mirror, rather than reliable, or indeed intelligible, facts. Or if this is not the case, the history interpolated between the pages of travel is a dry abstract, made by the mechanical process of abbreviating original works. A writer is very liable to deceive himself as to the value of this kind of compound. He may modestly estimate the worth of the personal matter and of the historical matter, separately considered,—and yet conceive that the one ekes out the other, so that a valuable whole results. Either element he could have wrought up into something good or telling, and would not have had the confidence to present by itself as it now stands—but he relies upon the combination, as if it was chemical, to produce a *tertium quid*; or he is misled like muddled thinkers, by the force of accumulation, into an impression that a great number of weak points make a very respectable case. In Mr. Whiteside's first volume there are two hundred pages of Florentine history.

It is bad promise when a work on Italy commences by speaking disrespectfully of the influences of Art. It may be excusable in a valetudinarian, or in a lawyer in whom neither temperament nor education have developed æsthetic properties, or in a plain man to whose bodily eyes a statue is only an unclothed figure, as to Wordsworth's dullard to whom—

“A primrose by the river's brim,
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more ;”—

but it is singularly ungenial in an author who takes Italy for his subject. Mr. Whiteside would perhaps profess a strong interest in Art, and no inconsiderable portion of his book is devoted to pictures and statues, but he betrays his unfitness to meddle with Art by betraying his total want of Faith in its refining power. At Florence, from the Tribune of the Uffizii he carries away no impression, at least he has given expression to

none, but that of the gross indelicacy of the exhibition, though there Art has two of her highest triumphs, in contrasted directions, in the pure, but cold, loveliness of the Venus de Medici, and in the sainted beauty of Raphael's Madonna. But what can be said of a writer who speaks of "discriminating between the beauties of the Fornarina and Titian's Venuses," as if they had any thing in common; and who is so stone blind to the Ideal, so insensible to the purifying influence of exalted grace and harmony in form, as to record against himself the following eminently ludicrous betrayal—"My Oxford friend quietly observed to me, he thought we might as well walk about naked before each other as through these galleries; and I agree with him"? If this be the case, Mr. Whiteside and his Oxford friend would be valuable property; they have "caught a grace beyond the reach of art." We have never had the pleasure of seeing either of them, but nevertheless we have a strong belief that if set upon pedestals, and without drapery, they would strikethe beholder's eye in a way—not in the least danger of being confounded with the impressions produced by the Apollo, the Antinous, the Mercury, or the children of Niobe. We knew a provincial town possessing an excellent Gallery of Casts from the Antique, which its Managers obstinately refused to open to the general public from a fear of the demoralizing power of the Apollo Belvedere, &c. These gentlemen, we suppose, made the same sort of confusion between themselves and works of Art, as Mr. Whiteside and his friend. They certainly had no faith in the high functions of ideal grace and sublimity to desensualize the mind, and remove the most common forms of life from all vulgar associations. We have heard of two American ladies sitting in the pit of the Opera when Taglioni was dancing—and, after a few moments' silent delight, of one of them exclaiming, 'This is Poetry,'—whereupon, after an interval, the other rejoined, 'This is Religion.' This, we confess, strains our sympathy; if not too bad, it is at least too much, but we have more liking for it than for the monkish modesty that never can be made to understand that there is a power in nature, art, religion, and elevated affections, to drive out all the lower orders of conception. Let us not be misunderstood: Mr. Whiteside, by the evidence of his book, is totally free from

vulgarity or pruriency of mind, but he is without the higher qualities of æsthetic perception, and knows not their operation.—In a kindred spirit he declines all share “in Mr. Roscoe’s eloquent regrets on the injurious effects of the Reformation on the fine arts.” It was not the duty of the Reformers, he says, to preserve fine pictures or statues, but to accomplish a revolution in the human mind. This is certainly true, but, surely in many cases, a revolution was needed in their own minds, and they were as much enslaved, more dangerously unspiritual, through their superstitious fear of such things, than were others through their attachment to them. The iconoclast and the idolater are alike unspiritual in their notions of the connection of materialism with religion, but the error of the latter is in the direction of a supply for one of human nature’s highest and most imperative demands, whilst that of the former takes the course only of a negative and destructive reaction. Mr. Whiteside is very far from a fanatic, he is a man of large toleration, of temperate feelings, and a friend of freedom, variety, and comprehension, where no principle is violated, in matters of Religion, but he is fond of speaking with contempt of Art; it gives him no pain to do so, whenever it appears to come into collision, though by no fault of its, with anything useful, or with anything great.

Neither is our author possessed of the pictorial faculty. Nature does not imprint itself upon his mind in such forms that he can convey to other minds clear images of her characteristic features; and he is not an observer, or preserver, of those minute but essential differences which give life and individuality to descriptions of men and manners. Yet with all these drawbacks he has many qualities that make him an agreeable companion. He is earnest and full of human interest: the country, the climate, the sky, the churches, the pictures, and the statues, are all subordinate with him to the deep and solemn affairs of human life. He has an easy complacency that preserves him in good humour, but never approaches an offensive egotism. He has a subdued satire which gives a flavour to his descriptions of religious ceremonials and modern miracles. And above all he has a practical and professional turn of mind which has led him to take a

strong interest in the philanthropic institutions of Italy, and to collect much curious information respecting the administration of Justice. In this last particular indeed consists any peculiar value which the book may possess. We may observe that the title he has given to his work is quite too large for its contents, which are mainly occupied with Florence, Naples, and Rome, and rapid journies between these places. We will revisit with him, and sometimes perhaps without him, these magic cities, which, after having eaten and drunk within their walls, still seem to us not of the common earth.

Florence, how far owing to the music and suggestive spell of its name it might be over curious to inquire, has a place in most men's thoughts as the fairest city in the world. To this impression the first experience brings inevitable disappointment, but, after a while, it returns and resumes its old place through the power of some charm which it is impossible to dispute, and very difficult to explain. Less beautiful in situation than Naples as well as less favoured in climate, poorer in every description of interest than Rome, it has yet a home character, a quiet grace, a prevailing air of refinement, within an easy, manageable compass, which make most travellers agree in the feeling that notwithstanding the beauty and the glory of its rivals, they would choose Florence for a residence. It lies within a bay of hills which encircle it like an arc, with the Arno for its chord. More than three-fourths of the city are between the Apennines and the river. Attractions the most varied lie within narrow bounds, and a succession of delights, ample for a life, may be enjoyed in a day, and every day. A steep, short walk, on the south of the river, leads by the Via Crucis to the Convent of San Miniato, whence the whole city is seen stretched out before you in the clearest outline, in smokeless brilliancy, with a depth in the shadows that reveals to you the wondrous power of the light, backed by the hills on which Fiesole is seated like a watch tower, and with the line of the Arno carrying the eye beyond the Cascine, the Park of the Florentines, to the richest of the Italian vallies.—This magic light is the chief source of the beauty of Italy. It gives a splendour to the meanest thing. A statue seen in the studio of a Roman sculptor, half open to the sky,

has almost the effect of colouring from the contrasts of light and shade, and looks as different from the same statue in the ante-room of an English exhibition, as Jupiter on Olympus and Jupiter in a dark cellar. The form and outline of the natural features of the country are not remarkable; there is no beauty of vegetation; the trees with the occasional exception of the walnut and the pine are poor and graceless; the olive, the most common of them, is shapeless and sombre; the ground is scrubby and broken, there is no carpet of verdure. Such is the aspect of things on a cloudless day: but when the sun is seen in the deep blue of the sky the world is as brilliant as a rainbow. Even Naples, with a cloud canopy loses all her charms. Except the curve of her shore there is nothing that the eye rests on with peculiar pleasure. The hills are cold and bare, there are few forest trees, the earth is burnt and patchy, the verdure broken like a drilled field. But no painter ever wrought a greater transformation on a surface of drab canvass, than does the sunlight upon these sombre features, and it seems enchantment, not capable of being described, for the effects are all aerial, when the blue of the heavens looks into the blue of sea, and the distinctness and brilliant colouring of every single object are compatible with the harmony of a picture. There are some pictures of Rubens in which it is delightful to dwell upon the colouring without attending to the forms: in such dreamy joy does the eye float over Naples and its bay. The sky is Italy's, but the earth is England's, and if for one day we could see an English landscape by the light of an Italian heaven, we should be drunk with beauty.—In Florence, as in all Italian cities, the light and the sun account for the narrowness of the streets, and one might suppose that the buildings were made so lofty for the sake of their shade. In England such streets would be dismally gloomy; but there the light penetrates sufficiently everywhere, and except at mid-day, when they say that none but dogs and Englishmen go abroad, the towns are made quaint and picturesque, and at least look cool though they do not always feel so.

One of the charms of Florence is the appearance, in

most things, of a prevailing refinement, elegance, and comfort: there are exceptions, and grievous ones, which would indicate that the Italians in their private life must be singularly unconscious or disgustingly coarse. It is impossible to walk the streets without wishing that they had all from their birth been placed under the restraints to which Cyrus was subjected according to the Persian discipline.* It is something however to be so evidently free from any idea of offence, and they spit and do disagreeable things with a wonderful simplicity. Every man you meet is well-dressed; there are no such things as rags, and all the clothes look perfectly new. This is a daily astonishment to an Englishman who travels with the idea that Italy is a poor country, and that English clothing is the cheapest in the world. The priests whom one meets everywhere in their long, but not graceful, robes, are on this account a never-ceasing wonder. With the exception of an occasional seedy brother, who is evidently a scamp and in disgrace, they all look as if they had stepped fresh from a bandbox. Then, every other day is a fête day, and silk scarfs of all colours are flying from every window, and the world is abroad in holiday attire. The women go clad in spotless white, and walk with an ease of grace and movement equalled only by an Irish girl with bare foot on her native sward, though there the full drapery is wanting. The Italian cities are not paved, but flagged with broad smooth stone, and this may contribute to evenness and elegance of motion. The head dress of the Florentine women is either their own hair in beautiful order, or the Tuscan hat, bonnets are unknown, arch-looking and flapping like a fan. The only drawback from all this grace is an excessive love of ornament. Silver spears project from their hair, which look as if they might be hurled with fatal effect. Necklaces of broad laminæ of something of the colour of copper have an unpleasant resemblance to the collars of beasts of burden. It is said that a Tuscan peasant spends the largest portion of his money in these ponderous decorations for his wife. Yet they cannot be very dear, for we once saw a Florentine woman cheapening a most brilliant ring, and when she went away without it, we bought it for about five pence.

* *Cyrop.* c. 11. 16.

The religion seems to encourage this tawdry taste, and the Madonna in her chapels is dressed out like a wax doll, with a profusion of trinkets, which is shocking, or ludicrous, or disgusting, or profoundly melancholy, as the humour of the observer may happen to take it. The ugliness, and coarseness, and unspeakable vulgarity of the images might seem designed to avert the dangers of image worship. Yet it is strange that a people so alive to beauty, and conversant with art, can endure such vile representations. A story is told of Andrea del Verocchio, that when on his death bed an ill-carved crucifix was held to his lips, he begged for a better one, else he should die of chagrin. This fastidiousness does not disturb the modern worshipper. The image of the Virgin above the altars of her chapels is often far worse than the worst bust that can be met with in a hairdresser's window ; and at Civita Vecchia on Easter Sunday we saw a representation of the Resurrection carried round the town, which we will not pain ourselves or our readers by attempting to describe. In the case of the Virgin, the tawdriness is no doubt to be attributed to devotion as much as to bad taste, for in the multitude of pious offerings her ornaments necessarily become redundant, but still this kind of image is constantly before the eyes of the common people in connection with the impersonation of all that is pure and lovely in womanhood, and must influence the style and habit of their thoughts.

It must not be supposed that all this show and procession is inconsistent, at least in Tuscany, with great industry among the people. There is a time for every thing. The Tuscan peasant, in common with the whole class of small proprietors wherever they may be found, is an indefatigable toiler ; and the industry in the streets of Florence is not less remarkable. It is a pleasant sight when the sun goes off one side of a street to see men and boys pouring out into the open air, and carrying on their work cheerfully together. They may look up now and then for a word with a passer by, or a quiet joke, but the labour seems to go on unintermittingly. And when the sun has gone down, and the short twilight is over, oil is cheap, and you see the work continued through the chinks of the loose shutters deep into the night. The children appear as industrious as the men. Indeed the gravity of Italian

children is half amusing and half painful. Except at Naples, where half the population are pick-pockets, idlers, or buffoons, mischievous or riotous boys are seldom seen. At Rome you meet large schools with the looks, and the dress too, of doctors of divinity. At Florence we have watched boys at work at all times, at sedentary and wearisome employments, and never heard a word of scolding or complaint pass between them and their masters or seniors. Sometimes a boy would rest for a moment to sport with a dog, but no angry voice recalled him to his task, and, after a play far too short to satisfy the dog, he would resume it himself with a hearty good will. The working classes seem an affectionate and simple hearted people, living in much love with one another, and much contentment with themselves, happy with bread and wine and salad, and occasionally a Bologna sausage, all very cheap,—and requiring nothing more, in the warm season at least, for Florence is no Paradise in spring or winter, than their lovely climate, walks, gardens, galleries, churches and processions. The two noble Galleries are open to all the World, and it is delightful to meet the peasant, the artizan, the simple country girl, in those magnificent apartments, on an equality with every other visitor, easy and courteous in manner, and talking to each other about the Masterpieces of Art with manifest zest. To all these attractions there must be added the general cheapness of living, and of all places of public entertainment. You go to an excellent opera, with a choice of two rival houses splendid in size and decoration, for a paul, which is five pence—or, if there is some extraordinary singer or dancer, for a lira, which is something less than eightpence. The following piece of felicitous description by Sterling seems to us redolent of the very atmosphere of Florentine life:—

“Here I breathe if not the most ennobling, certainly the most delightful air of my life. The two Galleries, and the aspect of the town, keep me in a state of harmless intoxication, more coherent than a dream, more exciting than rational insight, half poetry, half religion, or rather the pure enthusiasm which is common to both, clad in the fairest visible forms of nature and imagination. I fancy I write nonsense; but it is because I can find no sense to express the kind of childish, yet intellectual joy which Florence perpetually feeds in me.”—*Hare's Sterling*, vol. i. p. cxiii.

Mr. Whiteside has collected much detailed information respecting Agriculture in Tuscany, and for the sake of its connection with an important topic near at home, that of peasant proprietorship, we give the main results, on which we believe all authorities are agreed.

"In what state is the agriculture of Tuscany at the present day? This inquiry may be quickly answered; in the highest perfection. The whole country is cultivated, so far as it is capable, as a beautiful garden. The lands at either side of the road from Cortona to Florence, some sixty miles, present a picture of cleanliness, skill, variety of tillage, comfort in the dwellings and appearances of the people, not to be surpassed in any part of Europe. The vale of Arno is celebrated for the superiority of its tillage. I had never seen such an appearance of perfect cultivation; there is not a spot remaining of natural turf, nor a meadow left to its natural produce; every inch is planted or dressed by the hand of man; even the rivulets are changed into a thousand canals."—"Our next inquiry will be, What is the division of the landed property in a kingdom where agriculture has reached such a pitch of perfection?"—"The mass of Tuscan landholders enjoy an income varying from 8*d.* to £3. 6*s.* 8*d.* per year. This class amounts nearly to 88,000. The next largest class of 31,000 proprietors have an income varying between £3. 6*s.* 8*d.* and £16. 13*s.* 4*d.* per annum. These two classes outnumber infinitely all the rest, and this fact, coupled with the perfect system of cultivation which prevails, serves to prove that small holdings (freeholds) are not, as is very commonly supposed, incompatible with high skill, industry, and marked superiority in agriculture."—Vol. I. p. 117.

From Florence our author proceeds to Rome, and we must resist the temptation of stopping with him at Arezzo, Cortona, Thrasymene, Perugia, Assisi, Foligno, Clitumnus, Spoleto, Terni, Narni, and Civita Castellana, for such are the attractions of this glorious route. Mr. Whiteside's first visit to Rome was in the last year of Gregory XVI. That good-humoured but incompetent monk was in the hands of his dark remorseless minister, Lambruschini, and the Papal States were groaning under the most oppressive despotism. He gives as applicable to the condition of Rome in 1846, Niebuhr's description of it in 1830.

"It is a dreary life here in Italy; but I could not have supposed that I should have found it so melancholy. What advantage

to me are her works of art? Unhappily I am as little an enthusiast for works of art as an ancient Roman. I cannot live upon them. When that which is living disgusts, how can he who feels himself elevated and made happy only by the human soul and the human heart find compensation from statues, paintings, and architecture? The Italians, as a nation, are walking dead men. True, we must deplore and not hate them; for unavoidable misfortunes have plunged them in their degradation, but the degradation is not the less certain. Intellect and knowledge, any idea which makes the heart throb, all generous activity, is banished from the land: all hope, all aspiration, all effort, even all cheerfulness: for I have never seen a more cheerless nation."

In the summer of 1846 Pope Gregory died, and on the 15th of June Pio Nono was elected. In the winter of the same year our author returns to Rome, and finds a new city and a new people: 'Rome, Rome, thou art not what thou wast.'

"In the last week of October I re-entered the eternal city, but it was not the city I had left—joy beamed on every countenance; there was an unusual hilarity evinced by the people, the light of freedom had dawned amongst them. I met a priest of my acquaintance; he grasped my hand, exclaiming, '*We can speak now.*' It was significant of the mighty change which had sprung up. I was invited at once to subscribe to an English Journal, an Italian newspaper, a legal periodical. I asked myself, 'Can all this be true? Is this the Rome of Gregory?' There was an extravagance in the conversation of grave men; marvels were to be effected in a moment, railroads were to be made, academies of science restored, agriculture improved, commerce revived, the rest of the world outdone. Before, the Romans appeared the automatons of a priest; quickened, inspired by a divine hope, they now sprung forward as men girt to run a race. Their action—language—nay extravagance, showed their consciousness of past degradation and present emancipation, and betokened a resolution not to miss the glorious opportunity of becoming free. Their adulation of the Pope seems absurd, but it involves a profound principle altogether independent of the man. Walking up the Via Felice with a friend, we met an Italian sculptor of eminence; my friend mentioned, that 'Signor —— is now going according to his daily custom to the Quirinal, to see Pio Nono, who returns at this hour from his exercise.' The fact attracted my attention; I was introduced to this gentleman, and called on him, when we conversed freely about the Pope. I was affected by his observation,

‘Signor, you must excuse our behaviour towards the Pope: to you it must appear extravagant, but the English have long been used to freedom; we have been so wholly unaccustomed to liberty, that the unusual blessing excites our feeling of gratitude to a high pitch. I go every day to look at this Pope with astonishment, never having expected to see one who would profess to govern with justice.’ Looking round the Studio, I perceived the proclamation of the amnesty fastened on the wall, and an unfinished bust of Pius the Ninth under the artist’s chisel. ‘The Pope sat for your bust?’ ‘Yes, and conversed with me as a friend, knew my family, inquired about them; he has a heart in his bosom.’ ‘But,’ asked I, ‘was there really affecting yourself any practical oppression under old Gregory?’ He started:—‘No man could count on one hour’s security or happiness; I knew not but there might be a spy behind that block of marble; the pleasure of life was spoiled. I had three friends who, supping in a garden near this spot, were suddenly arrested, flung into prison, and lay there, though innocent, till released by Pio Nono. Believe me, Signor, no people ever suffered what we for sixteen years have endured.’ I shuddered at this fearful account of the government of him who claimed to be Christ’s vicar on earth.”—Vol. III. p. 191.

Mr. Whiteside describes graphically and truthfully the ceremonies and acclamations that attended the induction of the Pope; and as they strikingly contrast with the present state of feeling in the Roman people, and the present fortunes of Pio Nono, we give them at some length.

“The Pope has taken possession, in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, with splendid ceremonial. Rome during this day was more excited in feeling than she had been for ages. The pageant has passed by, but the reality of which it was the type will, it is hoped, remain. The sovereign pontiff has not merely completed his formal possession of a throne, but has possessed himself of the hearty affections of his people. The magnificent spectacle of the morning, succeeded by the voluntary illuminations of the evening, expresses but feebly the enthusiasm of the people, who already experience some liberty, and hope for justice from the magnanimity and wisdom of Pius IX. More from anxiety to witness the Pope’s reception by the multitude than from love of show and pomp, I sallied forth this morning, and took up my position in the Piazza of Trajan, where stands the tall column of an emperor, who near two thousand years ago governed Rome with virtue and valour. Naturally, as I waited for the cavalcade of holy men to approach, my mind reverted to the past and its stirring associations, to ‘the

commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome,' the men who ruled through the intellect, and loved freedom better than life; and I asked myself, would any portion of their stern spirit revisit the scene of their glories, and raise the fallen Romans of this our day from their degraded state.—The cannon thundered from the Castle of St. Angelo, and the procession moved on. Round the Piazza it came, and a brilliant pageant it was—chamberlains, and guards, and nobles, and prelates, and cardinals, in splendid array and curious costume of ancient fashion—dresses of many colours, and richest ornaments, and showy carriages and horses, loaded with costly trappings—and mules caparisoned in shining harness, all in proper rank and order, to describe which would require the pen of old Chaucer. But these shining figures were regarded as puppets—the great attraction was the popular Pope. When the state chariot appeared, the acclamations rung loud and universal. His holiness seemed deeply affected by sounds rarely heard by his predecessors. In his progress he continually blessed the applauding crowds by making the sign of the Cross. He is a man of fifty-four years of age, healthy in appearance, somewhat flushed in countenance, of a firm aspect, with decision and intelligence expressed by his brow.—By another and shorter route than the Pope's I got to an eminence exactly opposite the Colosseum before the procession reached that memorable spot. Under the arch of Titus passed the pompous array, and before the arch of Constantine, and round the Colosseum. Here stood the proud memorials of old Rome, and here, where famous conquerors had triumphed, and emperors held their gorgeous spectacles, a priest in peaceful triumph passed, whose kingdom ought not to be of this world, and whose rule while here below should be in accordance with the principles of the religion of Christ. The scene at this glorious locality was especially grand; respectable people in thousands, with a multitude of the lower classes, were here assembled to greet the pontiff in his progress. Shouts of 'Long live Pius the Ninth!' rent the air.—No city on earth could afford so singular a spectacle, or call up in the mind such associations of a mighty antiquity. It is when we dwell upon the past, that the consciousness of the brief space of our existence is forced upon us.—By a circuitous route I reached the lonely church of Santa Croce, which stands close to the venerable walls of ancient Rome, in a space utterly deserted and forsaken. There is more than a quarter of a mile of ground between this old church and the Lateran; very wide—no houses—some trees, badly cultivated gardens, broken remains of aqueducts, and sad memorials of past greatness. As you approach the Lateran, this tract of melancholy waste ground widens, affording ample space between the Scala Sancta and the Porta San Giovanni for the population of modern Rome.—We are now before the celebrated Basilica of St.

John Lateran. In this place were assembled fifty thousand people at least, countless carriages, the whole garrison of Rome, and all the persons who were engaged in the ceremonial described.—I entered the church, and was surprised to find it not so crowded as I had expected,—the attraction was outside. The Italians seemed to despise the splendid ceremonials within,—their thoughts were bent on higher and better things—the coming prosperity of their beautiful and heretofore oppressed country. The interior of the Basilica was decorated in a style of superb magnificence, of which the worshippers of our faith in our cold countries can have no conception. Draperies of gorgeous colours and costly materials were tastefully hung around, the huge columns were all dressed out, while the light was softened by curtains of crimson silk; and incense diffused around a fragrant perfume. The Pope in white vestments, rich with gold and jewels, was here borne round the aisles in his chair of triumph, with his fan-bearers and all his officers of state, and the long train of cardinals in their white vestments stiff with gold, and white mitres, in grand procession. The priests chanted. All the ceremonies were at last concluded, and his holiness had taken possession, when I passed to the Piazza in front of the Basilica to witness the giving of the blessing. This is the conclusion of the ceremonial, and by far the most striking part of it. The Pope is borne in his portative throne to the front window above the great portal of the church, the huge windows are removed, an awning raised, and decorations of arras and gold-wrought draperies spread around. The Pontiff can plainly be seen by the multitude in the Piazza. At a signal the cannons fire, the music breaks forth, the Pope raises his hand, the troops kneel, and some of the people, in profound silence. The spectacle is most imposing, but on this occasion the shouts of thousands of grateful people gave a life to the ceremony, without which it had been cold; and of the vast multitudes assembled, every individual exhibited the joy of his heart. The Pope raised himself and stood upright for some minutes before the people, the triple crown upon his head: this was the signal for fresh acclamations. He gave the blessing, waving his hand in the form of the cross.—So far as this exhibition was meant to figure forth the representative of Christ on earth, it was absurd, if not profane; as the investiture of a temporal Sovereign with power, it was reasonable, and it was magnificent. The Pope reigns in the heart of his people, because they believe he will relieve them from the miseries and oppression the Church had heaped on them. He has begun well, may he persevere, and live to reap the reward of his labours in the prosperity of his people!

“The evening of the day on which I had witnessed this grand ceremonial, I had a conversation with a sensible Roman. In the fashion of the time I poured forth praises on Pio Nono; he re-

sponded rather coldly to my encomiums, and at length remarked, 'It is true this Pope has done some excellent things, and may do more; but it would have been more desirable another Gregory should have succeeded to the Papacy; then, in the condition to which things had come, in a very little time the whole of this corrupt system must have fallen to pieces—now, it may for a time be *patched up*.' This was spoken by a virtuous man, a firm Catholic, not a bigot; certainly devoted to the pursuits of literature. I own it did surprise me to hear such a man anticipate with satisfaction the disruption or downfall of the Papacy. This gentleman evidently considered such an event would be a blessing, 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.' My acquaintance, in common with other men of education, may now publish his opinion in the press."—Vol. III. p. 197.

At the time we are now writing, the public papers are announcing that the cannon of St. Angelo have thundered again, not to the glory of the popular Pontiff, but to proclaim the doom of the Papal Government; and that the great bell of the Capitol, which hitherto has tolled only for the death of a Pope, has rung out with iron tongue the political extinction of Pio Nono, whom every voice was lately extolling as the Regenerator of Italy. This result was perhaps inevitable. The Popedom was too deeply sunk in bitter and hateful memories ever to become dear again as an Institution to the Roman people, and the moment they ceased to fear it, the long-concealed contempt was sure to break forth. Some men enter into the labour of their predecessors and enjoy its fruits, but Pio Nono has reaped only the deadly bitterness long engendered against sacerdotal government, but to which now, for the first time, the clemency of his nature and his rule has made it safe to give expression. His extravagant popularity, which no one could see without foreseeing its reaction, the act of political amnesty which opened his reign and won the gratitude of nearly three thousand persons and their friends, and the general nobleness of his character and administration, sustained him for a while in the enthusiastic love of the fickle Roman people, but also removed their traditional fear of the dread Power he represented; the familiarity he permitted lessened the mystery and awe which are the only real foundations of the Papal rule, and on the first disappointment all the old passions, released

from the old restraints, broke forth in scornful violence, and the idol became the victim, the victim of those whom he had armed against himself. We give an example of this undue familiarity, as showing the process by which flatterers are turned into masters:—

“On the last day of the year there was a procession to the Quirinal to visit the Pope. It consisted of crowds of young men marching with banners and music; they were full of enthusiasm, and ranged themselves in the spacious piazza with great joy; as usual they called for Pio Nono. His holiness appeared on the balcony, gave them his benediction, and remained while the young men sung a spirited hymn in two verses. A number of Bolognese youths had come to Rome to swell the procession and see the Pope. The behaviour of all the Italian crowds, on all the occasions on which I have seen them, is admirable—no discourtesy, or the least ill humour, much less is there any exhibition of violence in their conduct; but I confess I grow tired of these exhibitions, and wish they were over, yet they seem only beginning. It has a strange appearance to a foreigner to behold masses of the people, whenever excited on any subject, hurry off to the palace of the Pope, and call him out to gratify their humour; and it is undignified, to say the least, in his holiness, to make himself so very common. The motive in the people is excellent, but their adulation is excessive. They wish their Pope to understand he is the man of the people. On one occasion it was reported his holiness was indisposed, and the people taking the alarm marched off to the Quirinal, and would have him out dead or alive. The Pope resisted being dragged to the balcony; his determined visitors, not to be foiled, sent a deputation into the palace, with strict orders not to come forth till they had seen Pius IX.—a commission which was faithfully executed. Had this good Pope suddenly died, and I been his cook, or a suspected cardinal, I should have fled for my life: the first functionary would have been roasted on his spit; the second, still less respected, would have been torn in atoms—his red stockings and hat flung into the Tiber.”—Vol. III. p. 213.

This Roman people who never raised a hand, seldom even a word, against the basest, the most grinding, and the most contemptible of tyrannies, suddenly plucked up courage virtually to imprison, and at length formally to depose, the first Pope who had given to his subjects a political existence, and in his personal relations to them seemed desirous of achieving the name under which he ruled, of being more of a Father than a Sovereign. Pio Nono was

beset with cruel difficulties, drawn by conflicting tendencies which, in the nature of things, it was impossible to harmonize. His Power was a deposit committed to his hands for safe keeping, a trust which he held himself solemnly bound to deliver uninjured, unshorn of its privileges and glories, to his successors. So far the Pope was open and explicit; he warned his subjects "against adopting notions of theoretic freedom, which could not be applicable to the papal states." Here is his own declaration on the creation of a Council of State:—

"It has been with a view to the public good, that from the first moment of my being raised to the pontifical throne, I have done, under the inspiration of God, all that I have been able to do; and I am ready by God's assistance to do as much in the future, without however in any wise retrenching the sovereignty of the pontificate, as I have received it full and entire from my predecessors, so that I may in like manner transmit it to my successors. I have for my witnesses my three millions of subjects—I have all Europe for a witness of what I have hitherto done to bring my subjects near to me, and unite myself with them, that I might become acquainted with their wants, and make provision for them. It is with the object of better knowing these wants, and providing for the exigencies of the public welfare, that I have united you in a permanent council—it is to listen, in case of need, to your advice, and avail myself of its aid in my sovereign resolutions, in which I shall consult my own conscience, and confer upon it with my Ministers and the Sacred College. He will deceive himself greatly who shall see in the *Consulta di Stato*, which I have just created, a realization of his own Utopian notions, or the germ of an institution incompatible with the pontifical sovereignty."—Vol. III. p. 404.

To maintain the privileges of the Popedom unimpaired, to hand it down to his successors as he found it, and yet to give to the Roman people political liberty, civil rights, and a free press—to keep down disaffection, to satisfy reasonable hopes, and quiet reasonable fears, by an administrative wisdom and liberality, this is the impracticable problem which Pio Nono undertook to solve. It was only in the exercise of his temporal power that the Pope evinced his liberality. As head of the Church he has shown no disposition for dangerous reforms, and it is highly probable that his staunchness here relieved him of much priestly opposition in his political measures.

His conduct in regard to the Irish Colleges, indeed, would indicate that in ecclesiastical matters he is entirely at the direction of the Sacred College, for we cannot believe that he was made to understand the principles and details of the question, or that such a decision could have proceeded from his own sympathies, judgment, or prudence, if he had been in possession of all the facts and listened only to his own discretion. The French Revolution, which has shaken so many rotten things and brought so many important measures that were quietly maturing to an untimely ripeness, not less rotten, rendered it impossible for Pio Nono to succeed if he was determined to hold his precarious place. Indeed it must be doubted whether any constitution which he had the power of granting or acceding to, could have preserved even the nominal supremacy of the Papedom. The popular demands rose to a height which brought out the anomalies of his position, and were in clear and open antagonism to the preservation of that Sovereignty in the exercise of which he was willing to administer his large reforms. The Roman people would be self-governed; the Pope would govern them unexceptionably, but from St. Peter's Chair,—and just at this crisis a difference between them as to what was the right policy of an unexceptionable government rendered practical compromise impossible, and placed the parties before one another in connection with principles fundamentally opposed. The war in Lombardy roused the national enthusiasm of the whole country. The *Huns* must be driven from Italy, was the universal cry. There can be little doubt that the sympathies of the Pope went in the same direction. Austria saw and dreaded the inevitable tendency of Roman reform; and her occupation of Ferrara, though attempted to be covered by the provisions of a treaty, was an unmistakable sign of her inclination to intimidate. The Pope certainly placed himself in an ambiguous position, and this seems the weak point in his policy;—he did enough to displease Austria, but not in a way to gain the entire confidence of his own subjects. The crusade against the Austrians was preached in the pulpits of Rome, the Roman soldiers were seen in the van of Charles Albert's army, but the Pope resolutely refused to declare war by any official act. As a man and a Sovereign his sympathies were with the cause of Italian

liberty; as the Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church he could not place himself in unchristian relations towards his spiritual children. This reasoning did not satisfy the Roman patriots, and Pio Nono's popularity sunk fast, already damaged by some suspicious proceedings on the part of his censors of the press. The Italian people have little understanding of any kind of consistency but that which consists in headlong servitude to an impulse. For the difficulties of a complicated position, for the modified and qualified action that manifold relations impose, they have small consideration. For Pius to stop in the career which the one national passion prescribed, to remember that he was Papa as well as an Italian, was in their eyes to be a traitor. He had himself put into their hands the means, not indeed of constraining him for he is a man of firm will but, of embarrassing his government and even of setting him aside. He had consented to the enrolment of a National Guard, a measure that was equivalent to the placing of himself at the mercy of an armed populace, who had the power of coercing him, or stopping the whole state machinery, at the first moment that any irreconcilable opposition appeared between them. In the spring of 1848 this body seized upon some obnoxious Cardinals, under whose advice they suspected the Pope was acting in his refusal to proclaim war with Austria, and shut them up in the Castle of St. Angelo. The Pope sent their own General in one of his state carriages to release the imprisoned dignitaries, whereupon the General was informed that if he came down the stairs with the Cardinals they should be shot, and that he must take his chance in a shower of balls.—They seized the gates of the city, and suffered no one to pass unexamined lest he should be a suspected Cardinal in disguise. The Pope shut himself up in his palace in the Quirinal for some weeks. There was nothing for it but to wait till the tide should turn. It turned at last through the great influence of Gioberti, who came to Rome, and harangued the people on the unquestionable merits and sacrifices of the Pope as the Regenerator of Italy, and placed before them with clearness and judicious tact the conflict of his relations as Sovereign and as Pontiff.—Meanwhile all manner of lies were invented with the view of making the Pope's reserve towards Austria

more odious. It was assiduously reported, and confidently believed in Rome, that Radetzky was hanging all the Roman soldiers who were captured, as marauders and privateers out of the protection of the laws of regular war, and so every private family that had a patriot son in Lombardy was excited to madness against the Pope. All this was found to be a fabrication, and Gioberti's representations took effect. The name of Pio Nono regained something of its old magic, but the first enthusiasm was lost for ever. It was a touching thing to witness his first appearance in public after this rebellious conduct of his children, this fearful ebb of his popularity. His lips quivered with wounded sensibility, and through remarkable sweetness and dignity, a singular gentleness of benignity, he looked as if trust had fled and the shadow of the future was upon him. And when the National Guards rung their muskets on the marble floor, and then sunk in silent prostration for his blessing, there seemed no mixture of earthly enthusiasm in the deep devotion of his manner. But no personal dignity could take away the essential degradation of the exhibition. A man of fine intellect, of a deep soul, full of noble sympathies—enveloped in vestments, hoisted on men's shoulders in a portative throne, surrounded by fan-bearers, with feathers flapping on all sides, was borne down the aisle of a vast church and up the nave to the altar, blessing the people all the way, by no articulate words, but by tracing the sign of the Cross in the air, and then carried out again,—without performing any one function of a spiritual man, without saying one word from his own spirit to console, instruct, or elevate that great multitude, without performing any office for which a machine would not have been equally serviceable. We never had a profounder feeling of humiliation, a fuller conviction that Roman Catholicism is a miserable and insufferable mockery, on a large side of it a thing of candles and incense, silks, feathers, and upholstery. There is no place where as a Religion it looks less real than at Rome. The only thing we saw that spoke a true Catholicity was in the Transept of St. Peter's, the long line of Confessionals for every language under heaven. This was more touching than the embrace of the dome, or the mystic

aisles lost in distance, or the never-dying lamps round St. Peter's tomb.

We have said enough to make the Pope's flight to Gaeta, an unfortunate step because a virtual abdication, no mystery. No doubt the papal government is monstrous in principle and must be subverted, but so natural is the desire for poetic justice, that we could wish that St. Peter's Chair had been upheld till a worse man was seated in it,—and, indeed, as no change in Rome that does not connect itself with the general condition of Italy can be deemed permanent, we doubt whether Pio Nono will not ere long be again at the Vatican and the Quirinal.

Mr. Whiteside is very full in his description of religious sights and ceremonies, and there is a quiet good humour in his scepticism, which makes some of his accounts not a little amusing. He goes to see the Bambino that still performs miracles of healing.

“What means this excitement? It is the festival of the Benedizione del Bambino. I am reminded of the history of this Bambino, which shortly before I had given me by an Italian lady, and which I will here set down in her words:—

“Many centuries ago a Franciscan pilgrim came to the convent of the Ara Cœli, and asked for shelter. This was afforded, and on the departure of the pilgrim, he left behind him a small box, which lay for a year unnoticed. At the expiration of that time, a monk passing near the chamber where the box lay, beheld a great and unusual light. He alarmed the brethren by the intelligence that the convent was on fire. They rushed into the apartment, and found no fire, but a marvellous and brilliant lustre shining round the long-forgotten box. It was opened, and there was discovered a bambino, being no other than a figure of the Infant Saviour, which had been carved by the Franciscan out of the wood of a peculiar kind of tree that grew on the Mount of Olives, nigh Jerusalem, and painted by St. Luke himself, who was distinguished in that Art.”

“Here I ventured to suggest that the Franciscan order of monks did not exist in the time of St. Luke. Signora, nothing disconcerted, thought they did, and proceeded:

“The bambino was preserved and adorned, but at first had not the repute it now possesses. A lady, however, borrowed the Bambino from the convent, (as ladies about to have a child imagine by looking at an interesting object they may have the like,) and pleased with the Bambino determined to keep it, and accordingly, in execu-

tion of her pious fraud, procured another image, and dressed it up so exactly like the true Bambino that she deceived the good monks, who believed they had got back their own precious deposit, when in fact the false image had been palmed upon them. They laid it up carefully, and thought no more about the matter, till one day when the monks were all at mass they heard the big bell ring. This surprised them. They looked about, and saw all the brethren were present. The bell still tolled. They rushed up to the belfry, and lo! found the veritable Bambino, right under the tongue of the big bell. Amazed, they brought away the precious relic, and then inquired from the Princess to whom they had lent it, what she had done. She, terrified, confessed the imposition, and selling all her jewels bestowed the produce upon the miraculous Bambino who had so transported itself from the house of the Princess to the belfry of the convent, and rang the great bell to arouse the monks. From that time the Bambino has been the Consolation of Rome. When good Christians are dying, they send for it. A chosen party of monks, dressed in the habit of their order, (a carriage being provided for the sacred image, which is always taken abroad locked in a case,) proceed to the bed of the sick man, and then touch his forehead with the head of the Bambino. This was done (said Signora) when my dear father was dying, and he departed this life, satisfied and in peace."—Vol. II. p. 264.

We must not follow our author in his various excursions into the realms of Art. Very minute details will be found, wherever he goes, of the wonders that are to be seen, but the subject is vast and hackneyed, and criticisms on pictures and statues are proverbially dull and uninteresting to those who have not seen the objects criticised; and to those who have seen them, what can be said!

Neither must we linger with Mr. Whiteside at Naples, nor ascend Vesuvius along with him, nor accompany him through the awful solitude of Pompeii's Street of Tombs, nor visit the hoary sublimity of Paestum, where, between the mountains and sea, the severity of Art and the prodigal loveliness of Nature unite and worship together in the awful beauty of the Temples.

We are sorry to have to express our entire sympathy with Mr. Whiteside in his moral antipathy to the Neapolitans:—

"I conceived an unconquerable repugnance to the Neapolitan people which I could not overcome; their savage appearance, wild

behaviour, incessant uproar, gross ignorance and superstition, disgust a stranger; while to an invalid the din of Naples is intolerable. A man may occasionally smile at the amusing follies of a light-hearted people, but it is not possible to behold the utter degradation of his fellow-creatures, and preserve a permanently cheerful spirit.—As it regards the people, they are in all respects the reverse of the Romans, in look, manner, dress, disposition, and civilisation; insomuch that it is difficult to believe them to belong to the same country; an union between races so different would seem to be impossible.—The Romans are quiet in their streets, almost gloomy, naturally grave and serious; the Neapolitans are like a crew of Bacchanalians, in perpetual revelry. Naples seems ever in a carnival: it is scarcely possible to suppose the people we behold appear in their real characters; the business of life is turned into a masquerade. The glorious climate in which they live may have much influence on the habits of the people—their corrupt government more. Populous as Naples is, to a stranger it appears to possess a population exceeding that of London, for this reason, the whole mass of the population, man, woman, and child, rush with one consent into the streets in the morning, and continue there, shouting, grinning, dancing, or at their trades and occupations, till night. Little real business, all the while, is done. Naples, for its size and importance, has less trade than any such city in the world. The people supply the want of business by noise and clamour.”—Vol. III. p. 22-24.

Italy offers a tempting field for speculation on the future conditions of its kingdoms and peoples; but the elements are all too unreliable to afford data for moral reasonings, or safe ground for political predictions. The passion for Nationality is intense and diffused, but accompanied with no adequate appreciation of civil liberty, and with no union among its States. The Kingdoms of Italy are divided against one another, and against themselves. Of enthusiasm there is abundance; patriot martyrs might be found without limit ready to die in a fine phrenzy; if the single act of a Curtius could redeem and regenerate the Nation, Curtii would everywhere appear, but there is no union, no wisdom, no experience, no stubborn self-denial, no invincible perseverance. If military dressing, and parading, and beating of drums, and everlasting processions, could indicate national resolution and wakefulness, Italy appeared as one man, but meanwhile the most miserable jealousies were everywhere prevailing; republican and monarchical

factions plotting against one another; mock contingents furnished with traitorous designs; Naples and Modena cowardly and false, Venice selfish as usual, and Lombardy so envious of Piedmont as, purposely or by neglect, to leave the Sardinian army half fainting from want of food to meet Radetzky and his Austrians.—There are noble elements in the Italian character,—but how Italy is to become a Nation does not yet appear.

ART. VI.—THE APOCALYPTIC BEASTS.

The Number and Names of the Apocalyptic Beasts, with an Explanation and Application. In Two Parts. Part I. The Number and Names. By David Thom, Ph.D., A.M., Heidelberg. London: H. K. Lewis, Gower Street North. 1848. Pp. 398.

It takes all kinds of people to make up a world; and it is now evident, from a series of publications, that there is a distinct contribution to this agglomerate object in the genus David Thom. We have had the hardihood to allude, with not entire agreement, to some of Dr. Thom's former works, and though the presumption is transparent of persons, who confess that they are capable of error, expressing any doubt of the opinions of one who cannot err, who "is enlightened from above" and knows he has the truth—we touch again upon the unequal combat.

The first thing met with in the volume before us is a Dedication to the "Augustissimo" and "Potentissimo" Grand-Duke of Baden, to the "Amplissimo and Magnificentissimo" Charles Rau, and to all the Doctors, Professors, and Regents, Theological, Legal, and Medical, of the University of Heidelberg, written, as may be seen by the words already quoted, in the style of Latinity approved for such occasions, and offered as a tribute of gratitude for a degree of Doctor of Philosophy recently conferred by that University upon the writer. Then follows an epistle introductory, in terms of sad titular inferiority, to Mr. Richard Roe, formerly of Dublin, but now of London. And here at length, well off the fair but uncongenial banks of the Neckar, we find in what company we really are. We are introduced to a small knot of celebrities, very well known—to each other. Dr. Thom has discovered the name of the Second Apocalyptic Beast. Several years since he had communicated this to Mr. Richard Roe, but he now expresses "heartfelt gratitude to God" that he has been "spared to publish," and Mr. Roe to read, "this fruit of so many years' thought, toil and anxiety"—"the

germ of an entirely new system of Apocalyptic, and thereby of Biblical, interpretation." Mr. Roe and Dr. Thom may differ on some points—they do differ. But Dr. Thom has great confidence that Mr. Roe's "candid and generous disposition," "rich and varied learning," and many other great gifts, will prevent them, at least will prevent Mr. Roe, from quarrelling in consequence. But his chief ground of confidence in the continuance of peace between them, lies in Mr. Roe's "humble and modest estimate of self," which is defined (and the definition enables us to understand what is the exact interpretation of modesty received by this school) to be a quality which prepares men "for mistakes on *the part of others*," and "to make ample allowance for *their* infirmities." We have always known Dr. Thom to be a clever man, we have always believed him to be a conscientious and a kind-hearted man, but now we are ready to grant, what we used to scruple at a little, that he is a modest man, for his equanimity and self-possession in the midst of the errors of *other* men, and the blindness of the world at large, are almost celestial. The entertainment of the uninitiated reader with the little bye-play of intimacies, and the small coterie of mutually-patting friends into whose society he is introduced, is so great that he is much more disposed to linger on these suburbs and green spots in the city, than to get upon the Beast, and course through the dark and intricate streets—especially when he thinks his over-weening guide knows no more about the way than himself.

After eulogy Dr. Thom offers consolation. He is much grieved to think how little Mr. Roe's "literary and theological labours have been appreciated." But Mr. Roe's modesty is the cause of this. He has not, "like but too many literary men, been noisy and obtrusive." He has withdrawn his very pamphlets from circulation. It would not be kind, in the midst of so rich a vein of consolation, to ask whether Dr. Thom's Doctrine of Inversion ought not here to have a human application, and whether the sentence should not rather have run, "circulation has withdrawn from your very pamphlets." "Hence," concludes Dr. Thom to his friend, "your comparative obscurity!" We

would meekly suggest to the author whether, when next he writes a letter dedicatory, he might not with advantage bear in mind a piece of advice, which is to be met with in a book of French exercises, "You should never remind a friend of a misfortune, of which he does not complain, and for which you offer no remedy."

In the Preface proper, Dr. Thom informs us that "the spring of the year 1837 was the era of my discovery of the name of the Second Beast." But the first seems to have been second, and the second first with him. For it was not till afterwards—till "Monday, the 12th day of December 1846, that I unexpectedly *stumbled* on the knowledge of the *first*-mentioned of the two symbolic monsters." Dr. Thom hints that some extraordinary circumstances were connected with the former discovery. They are known to some private friends, but a wholesome fear "of the good sense of mankind in general and of the English nation in particular," has dictated a judicious reserve. He merely tells us what indeed the expression "*stumbling*," quoted above, might have led us to conjecture, that "the way in which his mind has been turned to the subject of the Apocalyptic Beasts" "involves in it something very much out of the common *run*."

The author, at whom we are laughing with all the good nature of our souls, besides being a man of ability and information, is, we have understood, one of the most amiable of creatures, and indeed the multifarious gratitude of his preface indicates this—for not only is he careful to mention the name of every one who has lent him a book, but every good-natured man who has given his £5 towards keeping the printer going, seems to receive his *quid pro quo* in fame. Something towards a hundred of these candidates for literary immortality gather, as thick as the ghosts about Charon's boat, into less than a page. The list closes with a rival, who has made, Dr. Thom hears, a discovery. Dr. Thom "is ignorant of the discovery," "but heartily wishes him success." The name of this gentleman is St. Claire. He "conceives himself to have discovered the Beast's name." Dr. Thom only takes one revenge on him for this intrusion into his *peculium*.—He slyly suggests that Mr. William St. Claire is himself the Beast.

"Query,—Is not this gentleman's surname, written in Greek characters, capable of bringing out the Apocalyptic number?"

Σ	200
τ	300
Κ	20
λ	30
α	1
ι	10
ρ	100
ε	5

666 "

—P. xxxv.

All men of any marked character of mind, or resolute object in life, are no doubt slightly deranged. It is no disrespect, therefore, to our Author to say, that here are signs of a more than ordinary claim on his part to this characteristic of genius.

Only a small portion of the handsome volume before us is occupied with the immediate discovery of the Author, and this he reserves as a *bonne bouche* for the end. He does not presume to supply a complete arrangement of the order or explanation of the matter of the Book of Revelation. To this he confesses himself not quite, though apparently very nearly, competent. Nevertheless he considers it in itself very explicable, and intelligible, and that its apparent darkness arises in fact only "from excess of light"—that it is really "the focus or condensation of all preceding scripture" (p. 41), and the grand source of its interpretation. He considers (very briefly and imperfectly) the authenticity and the genuineness of the book, and after granting that during the two or three first centuries of the Christian æra it was disputed and ranked among the *antilegomena*, the decision of the Council of Laodicea about A.D. 364, and common consent for 1,400 or 1,500 years since, are sufficient with Dr. Thom to restore all "its claims to be enrolled among the productions of prophets and apostles." The Heidelberg Doctors should have taught Dr. Thom more discrimination than this. It seems that even Mr. Richard Roe thinks "that the contents of this wondrous book received their accomplishment, in a great measure, if not entirely, at the æra of Jerusalem's destruction."—P. viii. ix. But Dr. Thom believes it to comprehend in its application a whole series of events past

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and to come, extending over the space intervening between the Resurrection of Christ and his second coming—and *because* “events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem are clearly spoken of as matters of future occurrence,” its date *must* be before A.D. 69 or 70, or else we must “impute to the Holy Ghost the uttering of prophecies subsequently to their accomplishment.” A man of Dr. Thom’s courageous independence, who dared a remarkable secession from the Church of Scotland many years ago, and dares now to stand alone, a man among Churches and Sects, ought to give his free mind a little more scope for the investigation of questions, which have not indeed penetrated into (for in that case they would scatter and destroy) the little *corps* of theological Masorets, of which he is an oracle ; but which are engaging the attention of the greatest religious thinkers of Europe, and must be settled before the slightest result of value can be shown to attach to the literal textual interpretations on which he and his friends and a host of religious writers are at present wasting their own time and the patience of the world. Thus Dr. Thom, supposing it to be proved that the Apocalypse was written A.D. 70, that it was written by an Apostle at the dictation and by the inspiration of the Almighty (facts, which though believed by Dr. Thom now, were vehemently doubted for the three first centuries), supposing that each verse and word of that book contains infallible and divine truth, and that we have every word in it now as it was at first infallibly and divinely written—supposing all these previous and most serious matters to be uncontestedly settled, applies himself to the publishing of a work, and the building up of a theory, which he believes affects more importantly than any thing else the theory of divine truth and the fortunes of the world, and he publishes and builds upon this single verse and its meaning:—“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast : for it is the number of a man ; and his number is six hundred three-score and six.”—Rev. xiii. 18. It is needless to say that in this grotesque and absurd undertaking the error of a single letter any time these eighteen hundred years, a jot or a tittle changed in any one of the different annumerations of the all-important letters $\chi\xi\varsigma'$ would overthrow Dr. Thom, the

world, and Mr. William St. Claire. "Here is wisdom," says our Author, clearly proving that the words which follow are the mine in which all men should search as for hidden treasure. "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast," obviously indicating the employment to which a man of serious reflection should apply all his powers. "For it is the number of a man" (Mr. William St. Claire, to wit, possibly), "and his number is six hundred three-score and six." What if it had been originally written one more or one less, and that we have the total wrong by one! But this the Holy Ghost would have prevented! for no other useful purpose that we can imagine, but that Dr. Thom or some other of his fellow-diviners should be right. We have no language strong enough to express the sorrow with which we witness so much conscientious laboriousness, so much energy and zeal, so much goodness and piety, stolen away from the great truths of Heaven and the great wants of Man, and wasted on this numeral-splitting, word-drawing, busy idleness. Why should we be condemned to the grief of seeing the spirit of the Scriptures thus degraded and scholars and Christians turning themselves into theological soothsayers? Had Dr. Thom entitled his book a summary of the various interpretations of a verse or two in the Revelation, which have obtained currency from the earliest to the latest times, we should have estimated his work at its antiquarian and theological value, regretting that he had occupied in such an employment, time that might have been so much more valuably spent. But when he adds himself to the number of the prophets, and in the incurable self-complacency of spirit, which only can characterise a man "enlightened from above," hints miraculous aids to his discovery of the name of the Beast, we repeat the regret which we have felt and expressed before, though without any hope of averting him from his wasteful and wearisome hallucinations, for we are of the "unregenerate," and do not claim even to be "moderately enlightened by the mind of God." Still less could we dream of coping successfully with one who declares that his object is not only of an infinite importance, but that his criticism, "instead of coming in the attitude of a probable conjecture, sets all opposition, from whatever

quarter, at defiance. It is true, and it claims to be acquiesced in as what it is."

Some of our readers may all this time be unconscious of the object at which Dr. Thom is aiming. The high wisdom at which he desires to arrive (and which in fact he has now reached) is to discover the names of the Beasts. These names must give the number 666, and this number, denoted by letters, must give in letters the Beasts' names. Up to page 391, Dr. Thom examines the chief solutions which have been offered from early ages to the present time. They are all wrong. His process is a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*. The name is not Οὐλπίος (the Emperor Trajan). It is not "*Ipse Catholicæ Ecclesiæ Visibile Caput*." It is not Ludwig or Lewis. It is not Napoleon Bonaparte. It is not Antichrist. It is not Tradition. It is not Apostacy. It is not the Papacy. It is not *Lateinos*, or the Latin Person. It is not even Mystery. The true solution is, finally, on page 392. The first Beast is Η ΦΡΗΝ, The Mind. This we can readily believe, and we are quite sure that Dr. Thom must have slain him in mortal combat, and extinguished all remains of vitality in him, before he published this book. The Second Beast is ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΙ ΣΑΡΚΙΚΑΙ, Fleshly Churches; from which the Author has long separated himself, without, as far as we can discern, making any perceptible improvement in consequence. Over this Second Beast, however, he has not as yet been so victorious as over the first.

It is impossible to convey an idea of the confidence, the chuckles of superiority, the minute ratiocinations, and the grave logical formularies, in which Dr. Thom pursues these various explanations to their destruction. To be believed in they must be seen. The author is out of place in Bold-street, Liverpool. He belongs of right and nature to the school that gathered long ago at a far inferior sea-port. How invaluable he would have been at Tiberias, and among the *Keri* and *K'thib*! ay! and how happy too—for we fear he is as one born out of time. We do not wish to declare every exploded critical mode ridiculous, and are ready to grant that there is often a certain dignity in the pains-taking trifling of more ignorant ages. But truly the only respectable thing in this volume on which we can

lay our hands is the old and early conjectural interpretation of Irenæus—given with modesty however as only “very probable”—a hesitation in which the bolder Thom detects the self-betraying tremblings of uncertainty and doubt. He thought the name of the Beast was *Lateinos* or the *Latin one*, which he thus made to correspond to the required numerals 666.

A	30
α	1
τ	300
ε	5
ι	10
ν	50
ο	70
ς	200

666

Subsequent commentators adopted and filled up this idea, with a fuller accommodation to Papal Rome. Among these was Faber, (though he afterwards deserted this solution,) who quotes from More. “The Papists,” as Dr. Henry More aptly expresses it, “*Latinize* in everything. Mass, prayers, hymns, litanies, canons, decretals, bulls, are conceived in Latin. The Papal Councils speak in *Latin*. Women themselves pray in *Latin*. Nor is the Scripture read in any other language, under Popery, than *Latin*. Wherefore the Council of Trent commanded the *vulgar Latin* to be the only authentic version: nor do their doctors doubt to prefer it to the Hebrew and Greek text itself, which was written by the prophets and apostles. In short, all things are *Latin*: the Pope having communicated his language to the people under his dominion as the mark and character of his empire.”

As the Useful Knowledge Society have put the astrological almanacs out of *ton*, respectable people have been fain to gratify their love of fortune-telling and predictions in a religious way by devouring some new editions of Fleming—a respectable Nonconformist Divine, who ventured upon this path of criticism some century and a half ago. Out of the thousand and one predictions that have been founded on passages in the Apocalypse, a thousand of which time has falsified, it would be strange if there were not one which it has appeared in some measure to

verify. And it must be confessed to be remarkable, supposing the reprint of Fleming's book to be correct, that he should have hit upon the two dates of 1794 and 1848, as periods of great Papistical convulsion. The year 1849 may put the prediction to a trying test, and we may be forced to wait (which we may do, and the fame of Fleming be still safe for two or three generations more) for the year 2000, for the grand test of the prophet's accuracy—for then, we think, the millennium commences with him, and our great-great-great-grandchildren.

Truly we are sorry for these things. We would much rather see the old gypsey, the old witch, Moore's Almanac, *et id genus omne*, back again and in their acknowledged places, than this *learned* trifling, this *sacred* prying, this *wasted* education and piety. And after all, we hope these things take hold of a very insignificant and uninfluential part of the English public—a kind of committee-room public off Exeter Hall, and that the observation of Heinrich's is true —“ *Explosa jamdudum sunt et ludibrio habentur absona illa opinionum commenta, in quibus ad Apocalypsin profundendis male sedulo olim se exercuerant interpretum ingenia, atque si vel nostra ætate passim videntur resurgere, opprimuntur tamen facillime et dissipantur, neque inveniunt cordatorum virorum permultos, quos delectet rerum prudentiæ inanissimarum contemplatio.*”

ART. VII.—PETER JONES.

Peter Jones. An Autobiography. Stage the First.
London: Chapman, 1848. Pp. 220.

WE like Peter as a travelling companion, and are ready, when he is ready, to start with him on Stage the Second. We should like it better if we knew where we were going, and whether we were making for Yucatan or Nimroud: but whatever the goal, if Mr. Jones makes the remainder of his journey as interesting as the part now published, we shall be content. We do not believe that it is an autobiography of Peter Jones. It may be a substantially genuine account of the progress of a human mind through several historical and theological difficulties, and may be written by the owner of that mind—but then that mind is not Peter Jones's. Or it may be an account of Peter Jones and his search after truth and light, but then Peter Jones did not write it.

Peter Jones is the son of a working-man—a working-man himself. He is so poor as a boy that his occasional stolen visit, in obedience to an overmastering curiosity, to the shilling gallery of the theatre, seriously curtails the necessary comforts of the family. And yet the working-man scarcely peeps out any more. Visits to the Mechanics' Institution and to Church, the being called by his fellow-workmen the Oracle, and a cheap trip to London, would not have stood in their present isolation, had the autobiography been really of Peter, or had Peter written it. Look at the autobiography of a working-man in Mr. Knight's weekly volume. That is genuine—but therefore full of the indications of actual life. Peter's autobiography is a mere series of inquiries and reflections—natural indeed to a clever, thoughtful man, and interesting in the mode of their evolvment—but impossible to have been written in their present manner by the man whom Peter Jones represents himself to be.

The idea by which the writer is haunted is that all things that are, have been—or have been a very long time. Paley repeats the arguments which Socrates unfolded,

Milton represents the mythology which Homer immortalized, and bird-catchers in England use the same nets and devices which were common in Egypt. We learn from Genesis that among the children and grandchildren of Adam there were cities, arts, and manufactures, which is very bewildering, considering the fact, also learnt from Genesis, of man's nudity so short a time before. Geology, Astronomy, and Chronology, are sadly at variance with Mr. Jones's views of the Bible—but as his knowledge of the former expands, his views of the latter improve. We think this little book admirably calculated to help minds of a certain fearless, thoughtful, but not highly-educated character, of which there are very many among the working-classes, out of difficulties which we know often press heavily upon them. The *conclusion* of the Stage is not so satisfactory as its progress. The author rightly supposes that man was not created a savage—or else he thinks he must have remained so. Some original creative power, or some external influence, must have given him the means of civilization. But this he oddly enough attributes to a preceding but extinct race—some family of Titans or Giants, a kind of migratory Masonic tribe, who carried civilization, architecture and ideas with them all over the earth, and upon whose extinction the succeeding inhabitants of the earth degenerated into comparative barbarism, and would have been no better than wild beasts or savages, but for the fragments of ideas and arts left behind them by the previous races. Suppose that the fact of such a race of human beings, having existed and having perished, could be proved, the metaphysical difficulty of the origin of the civilizing power is not solved: for even if such a race existed, whence did it receive its impulse?

“It seemed evident to Peter Jones, that the *primitive* people who had perished—whose name and nature were unknown—had left behind them IDEAS which exist to the present day. Yet these ideas have undergone numerous transmutations. It is easy to account for early idolatry. The lightning, the thunder, the winds, prolific nature, the sun, the moon, the stars, poisonous serpents, all the powers of a world with which man was yet unacquainted, became to him deities. But what shall account for the IDEA of a Superior BEING, which presides over even the grossest idolatry of the most savage people? *That* speaks of a source anterior to

savage existence; the IDEA of a Supreme God is not the creation of a single day— even *now* man has not reached the conception, glimpses of which are got in the old theologies of four or five thousand years ago. It might also be imagined that this idea of a Supreme Being had floated over the flood, by which a prior civilization had been broken up; and that, on its subsiding, it had descended to our times.”—P. 218.

What if that Superior Being, as among the natural gifts of his creative power to his creatures, gave the idea of himself?—and that this idea, like his other gifts of reason and of speech, has been variously developed: germinating into a Titanic, or degenerating into a barbaric, or being perfected into a Christian, form? To account for the universal sense of a Supreme Being, by ascribing its present existence to its having a former existence, is the old story of suspending a link by a link.

ART. VIII.—PATTERSON'S ZOOLOGY.

Introduction to Zoology, for the Use of Schools. By Robert Patterson, Vice-President of the Natural History and Philosophical Society of Belfast. Part Second—Vertebrate Animals. Simms and M'Intyre. 1848. 12mo. Pp. 476.

THE second and concluding part of the above work has lately been published, and the favourable opinion we expressed of the first is equally due to that we have now before us. The book in its present complete form is assuredly a valuable addition to our school libraries; and, contrasted with our abridgments of Goldsmith's "Animated Nature," and Mavor's "Natural History," which were text-books in Zoology in our childhood, is as superior as the discoveries in this branch of knowledge are numerous and important.

There is a particular satisfaction in presenting this work to our young friends, as we are aware that the writer has the best authority for every fact mentioned, and, upon all doubtful subjects, has consulted men most celebrated in the different departments of the science. It is a book that one cannot take up for a quarter of an hour without finding instruction and amusement. We believe, however, we shall best convey an idea of the various subjects treated of, by a few extracts. Speaking of fishes the Author says:—

"Most fishes are covered with scales, which differ considerably in their shape, and are yet so uniform in each particular kind, that they serve as valuable aids in the discrimination of species. Those along the well-marked line, observable on both sides of the body, are distinguished from the others in shape, and each of them is found to be pierced with a small hole, which is in fact the extremity of a tube. Through these orifices a mucus or slime is emitted. This forms a coating to the body, and diminishes the friction of its passage through the water. These apertures are in general larger and more numerous about the head than over the other parts, and may be regarded as one of those beautiful provisions of Nature which

we are permitted so frequently to observe and to admire. 'Whether the fish inhabits the stream or the lake, the current of the water in the one instance, or progression through it in the other, carries this defensive secretion backwards, and spreads it over the whole surface of the body.' The scales are sometimes marked with minute lines, possess a varying metallic lustre, and exhibit a diversity of brilliant colours which render them highly attractive objects."—P. 215.

"The true cause of death in a fish kept out of water is an interesting question, which appears to have been satisfactorily answered by M. Flourens, a French Physiologist. Though the gill-cover be raised and shut alternately, the gills themselves are not separated. Their fine filaments rapidly dry and cohere together. The blood can no longer circulate through them, and hence it is not affected by the vivifying influence of the oxygen of the air. 'The situation of the fish is similar to that of an air-breathing animal enclosed in a vacuum, and death by suffocation is the consequence.'"—P. 223.

"To those who have never considered the omnivorous appetite of fishes, the examination of the stomach of a few of those which are most commonly used as food, will furnish very sufficient evidence of their habits. Perhaps the fact cannot be better exemplified than by quoting a passage from a lecture delivered by Dr. Houston, of Dublin, before the Royal Zoological Society of that city:—"This preparation (for the fidelity of which I can vouch, as it belongs to the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, and which may be taken as a fair average specimen of a fish's breakfast party, captured at an early hour of the morning) will serve as an illustration of the voraciousness of their habits. Here is the skeleton of a Frog-fish, two and a half feet in length, in the stomach of which is the skeleton of a Cod-fish, two feet long; in whose stomach again are contained the skeletons of two Whittings of the ordinary size; in the stomach of each Whiting there lay numerous half-digested little fishes, which were too small and broken down to admit of preservation. The Frog-fish, with all these contents, was taken last summer by the fisherman, and offered for sale in the market as an article of food, without any reference at all to the size of its stomach, which to them is an every-day appearance.'"—P. 226.

His description of the fresh-water Eels is also interesting:—

"Three species of fresh-water Eels are described as British. Some of these remain permanently throughout the year in certain ponds or rivers, and there deposit their spawn; but this is the exception to the rule. The Eels may in general terms be described as making a migration to the sea in the autumn of the year, for the purpose of

spawning. It is at this time that they are taken in the largest quantities for the table. In the north of Ireland, one great place for their capture is Toome, on the Lower Bann, a river connecting Lough Neagh with the sea. The fishermen there assert that the Eels (*Anguilla acutirostris*) avoid the moonlight, and that 'a run' of fishes only takes place when the night is dark, and that even a flash of lightning will stop their progress. We are informed by Mr. Finiston, of Toome, that he has 'completely stopped their progress by placing three large lamps so that the rays of light fell on the surface of the water, directly over the entrance to the net.' A 'run,' as it is termed, occurs only two or three nights in the season, but the quantity then taken is very considerable. So many as 45,000 small Eels have been taken in one night; and there are generally about sixty middle-sized Eels and ten large to each thousand of small. They are taken in nets, which may be compared in shape to sugar-loaves with the tops cut off, each from fourteen to sixteen yards long, and placed between weirs. At an early period of the summer it is an interesting sight, at the Cutts, near Coleraine, on the same river, to mark the thousands of young Eels there ascending the stream. Hay ropes are suspended over the rocky parts, to aid them in overcoming such obstructions. At such places the river is black with the multitudes of young Eels, about three or four inches long, all acting under that mysterious impulse that prompts them to push their course onwards to the lake. 'There is no doubt that Eels occasionally quit the water, and when grass meadows are wet from dew, or other causes, travel during the night over the moist surface, in search of frogs and other suitable food, or to change their situation.'—P. 246.

On the distribution of Serpents, he quotes from Schlegel.

"One of the most curious facts in the distribution of Serpents, viewed in relation to different parts of the globe, is, their total absence from the numerous isles of the Pacific Ocean, a phenomenon the more remarkable, since the neighbouring isles, forming the great Indian Archipelago, belong to those regions of the earth most abounding in Serpents. Another interesting fact is, that the Serpents, and indeed all the reptiles of America, are specifically different from those of the Old World; while, on the other hand, a great many birds and several mammiferous animals of North America are precisely the same as those of Europe and a great part of Asia."—P. 275.

Again,—

"Among the venomous serpents is one which possesses a classical

and historical interest, associated as it is with the death of Cleopatra—the Egyptian Naja or Asp. It is at present much used by the Egyptian jugglers in their exhibitions. One of a nearly allied species, the Cobra-di-Capello, has a curious mark on the skin of the neck, not unlike a pair of spectacles. A specimen of this Snake was presented to the Belfast Museum, by Major Martin, (now residing at Ardrossan, Ayrshire,) who narrated to us the following interesting occurrence:—‘While stationed in Ceylon, his servant one morning ran into his room and informed him that a favourite hen was lying dead in her nest, and that the twelve eggs on which she had been sitting were taken away. Supposing it must have been by a snake, immediate search was made throughout the hen-house, and other adjoining premises, when a Cobra-di-Capello was found under a piece of wood, and was immediately killed; being opened, the eggs were found in its belly. Nine out of the twelve eggs were broken, the remaining three were immediately put under another hen that was sitting, and in due time a chick was produced, and the race of the feathered favourite thus preserved from extinction.’—P. 278.

Speaking of Chameleons:—

“We have watched for hours their sluggish and almost inanimate appearance, though even at such times they occasionally manifest the singular changes of colour for which they are so celebrated. These, however, are not to the extent set forth in a well-known poetical composition, with which every schoolboy is familiar; but after all allowance for popular exaggeration, the phenomenon is sufficiently curious to have been for a long time one that naturalists were unable to explain. It was reserved for Milne Edwards to solve the problem. He has shown that there exist in the skin of these animals two layers of membranous pigment or colouring matter, so arranged that both may be visible at the same time; or that the lower layer may appear in varying proportion amid the upper; or that it may be altogether concealed beneath it. This mechanism is similar to that which exists in some of the Cuttle-fish, to whose changes of colour we have already referred.”—P. 284.

In his remarks upon Eagles he observes:—

“Mr. Thompson records the capture of three of these birds at Glenarm Park, County of Antrim; the bait employed in each instance being the body of a duck or a lamb. So great is the quantity of food they collect when rearing their young brood, that a poor man, in the County of Kerry, got a comfortable subsistence for his family during a time of famine by robbing an Eagle’s nest.

A similar occurrence took place at Glenariff, County of Antrim, in the early part of the present century. 'One of a pair of Eaglets, taken from a nest there, was so placed that during the summer its parents supplied it with rabbits and hares in such abundance that its owner obtained a sufficiency of animal food besides for himself and family.'—P. 333.

"The nest or eyrie of the Eagle is associated in our minds with highly poetic imagery; but it is regarded in a different light by those who live in the vicinity, and suffer by the predatory habits of its inmates. By them it is viewed as the abode of the spoiler, and the nursery of a future race of aerial tyrants. Various means for its destruction are accordingly resorted to; among others that of lowering a lighted brand into the nest. This was the plan pursued on one occasion at Roshen, County Donegal; the nest was consumed, three unfortunate eaglets fell scorched and dead to the ground, and the old birds from that time deserted the mountain. A similar mode of destruction has been resorted to at times in other localities; and this no doubt suggested to Campbell the splendid description of the burning eyrie, in the Wizard's prophetic warning to Lochiel."—P. 335.

The next quotation we shall make is concerning the English and Irish Hares:—

"The fur of the English and Scotch hare is well known as valuable to the latter, while that of the Irish hare is worthless. It is only of late years that it has been ascertained that the difference is not confined to the fur, but that the two animals are specifically distinct; and, still more recently, Mr. W. Thompson has arrived at the conclusion, that the hare of Ireland is identical with that known as the Alpine, or varying hare of the Scotch mountains, notwithstanding the great difference in locality and habits. In this opinion Mr. Waterhouse concurs; so that it may now be regarded as an established fact that there are in reality but two species of hares in these islands."—P. 407.

The book, in fact, presents the very cream of the science of Zoology in its most attractive form, but we trust that the extracts already given have sufficiently exhibited its merits. We cannot better conclude our notice of it than in the words of the author himself:—

"The study of the living tribes, by which the earth and the waters are peopled, forms one department of that course of mental culture, to which every man in every condition of life should be subjected. Such study trains our perceptive faculties to action;

leads us to compare, to discriminate, to generalise, and to make the acquisition of one truth the means of ascending to another still more comprehensive. It supplies pleasant and profitable companions amid the solitude of the shore, the dell, or the mountain; brings us a rich heritage of cheerful thoughts and healthful occupations; and, above all, it teaches us to see the beneficence of the Great First Cause even in the humblest of the creatures He hath made."—
P. 450.

ART. IX.—SOLLY'S LECTURES ON THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

Lectures on the Developement of Religious Life in the Modern Christian Church. (To be completed in Six Monthly Parts.) Part I.—Luther and Munzer. By Henry Solly. London: C. E. Mudie. 1849. Pp. 50.

“THE Principles of the Reformation,” from being looked upon as the clearest and best known of things, have come to take their place among the most disputed and uncertain. The Anglo-Catholic joins with the Roman Catholic in nicknaming the Reformation the Deformation. With one set of religionists in England that great revolution of the sixteenth century means nothing more than a throwing off of a foreign ecclesiastical yoke, and the corruptions which it entailed, and the introduction of a self-recovery, of a self-dependence and a self-reform in the church of these islands. With the Calvinist and the Lutheran, the Principles of the Reformation mean good orthodox doctrines according to their definition of the same—Corruption and Damnation, Sacrifice and Salvation. The rationalist and the liberal declare that they have always taken the Principles of the Reformation to mean, Freedom of Inquiry, the Bible and the Bible only the religion of Protestants, &c. A little attention to that much-neglected branch of human research, an inquiry into things as they actually were, is dispelling many of these prejudices. We are beginning to distinguish between the principles which produced the Reformation, and the principles which resulted from it; between the aims and feelings of those who achieved it, and the uses to be made of it by those who have succeeded to it.

From the regions where light has been radiating on these topics of late years, Mr. Solly has applied the conductor of a clear and popular style to bring some rays into the nether darkness of a humbler world. Nor need he be ashamed of a task which is well executed, for it was Cicero's greatest praise to Socrates that he brought Philosophy from the clouds.

In the first of the Lectures before us the theological position of Luther is accurately described, and relieved from the obscuring errors alike of the liberal and the evangelical. Luther's foundation doctrine was not "Freedom of Inquiry," nor "Salvation by the Sacrifice of Christ." It was "Justification by Faith,"—not as opposed to justification by the works of the moral law, but as opposed to justification by the works of the papal law. It was "Faith in the Merits of Christ"—not as opposed to faith in the mercy of God on repentance—but as opposed to faith in the o'er-brimming merits of the Saints. This view is deducible even from the panegyric of D'Aubigné, from every page of whose partial and one-sided work it bursts out, that the true interpretation of Luther and his doctrines is to be found through a constant reference of contrast, not to the liberalism of modern Geneva, but to the ecclesiasticism of the Rome of that day. The same good judgment which leads Mr. Solly to reject the common theories of Luther's doctrines, leads him also to distinguish between the opposing systems of interpretation applied to Luther's Master, the Apostle Paul. He acknowledges Paul's Doctrine of Justification by Faith. We think him right in rejecting the efforts to make Paul talk good Unitarian doctrines of the early part of the nineteenth century. We have ever in this reference felt Mr. Belsham's Commentary on that Apostle's Letters to be one of the most unsatisfactory books. The great error of Commentators of this school has been an oversight of the distinction between what Paul taught, and what we must necessarily believe. If a scholar of the nineteenth century is not only bound to receive the spirit, but also the letter of St. Paul's theology, he has to make a convulsive effort to make St. Paul say only what is credible to himself. If, on the other hand, he is free to accept or to decline particular arguments or aspects of St. Paul's expositions of Christian Doctrine, he can let the Apostle speak for himself. But the mistake of commentators of Mr. Belsham's school has been the perhaps unconscious, but most certain, presence of this understanding: "We must believe what St. Paul says, therefore we cannot let St. Paul say anything that we cannot believe." Now we would say that a truer course is to let, in the first place, St. Paul speak for

himself—let us have what he actually meant, thought, and said, irrespectively of its influence on any questions of modern opinion,—and then consider how far, and in what mode, his teachings are to be received by us. The specific objects which St. Paul had in view—the specific modes in which he set himself to meet the demands of a certain class of prejudices and convictions—may not always be applicable to existing circumstances. But we fear that while the effort to make St. Paul take a modernly-believable and reasonable view, has led some to distort his actual arguments and positions, so the desire to make now receivable what he really did say (forgetting the changed relations), is leading others into an artificial and overingenious explication of his theories as in themselves permanent, and occasioned by permanent necessities.

Amidst many good and sound things, for instance, said by Mr. Solly, on the efficacy and the needfulness of the Death of Christ (in both of which we heartily believe), there is a character of expression, into which he is betrayed by too strong a reaction from the old rationalist school, from which we must express our dissent. He seems to acknowledge it as an “essential truth,” a “central truth,” “that it is in *consequence* of Christ’s love, obedience and sufferings, that God’s infinite mercies and unspeakable blessings in time and in eternity are received by men.” —“It is Christ’s love and faithfulness which brings salvation from God to man.”—P. 14. That Christ is “The Way” to us, we believe—that he is the chosen medium of God’s best spiritual gifts to us, we also believe—that his life, his death, and his immortality, are the conveying means of this salvation—we believe. But words like those we have quoted seem to imply that Christ is the Author, not in the sense of the conveyer and giver, but in the sense of the cause and originator, of our salvation; that we receive our spiritual salvation in *consequence* of his death and obedience; that it is not so much God who gives us the means of our salvation through and by “Christ’s love and faithfulness,” as “Christ’s love and faithfulness” that *give*, bring, and are the cause of, “Salvation from God to man.” This makes of Christ and his Mission not an agency, and an instrumentality, but an efficient cause. We see in such a view only a refinement upon the

ordinary view of Christ's making God complacent to us. We accept Christ as the way, the medium, the agent of God's Salvation to man, we do not receive him as the cause. We believe "God's infinite mercies and unspeakable blessings in time and in eternity" to be received not "in consequence of Christ's love, obedience and sufferings"—but in consequence of God's own free mercy to us—and by the means of "Christ's love, obedience and sufferings."

We have been struck with the calmness, soundness and discrimination which Mr. Solly manifests in the first of these Lectures,—qualities for which when we have formerly met him we did not think him so remarkable as for warmth and sanguineness of temperament. A little more, perhaps, of the original man comes out in the second Lecture, which is an endeavour to rescue poor Munzer and his associates from the opprobrium of their wild fanaticism. Here we are drawn—by the warm and generous sympathies of the author with whatever is or appears to be down-trodden and neglected, (for which we honour him,) and by the reactionary spirit of the present time, which spreads around us like an atmosphere, and almost compels us to presume that our favourable and our unfavourable judgments of the past are alike mistaken—into an apology for the fanatical extremes of the Anabaptist insurrection. No doubt oppression, which makes even a wise man mad, is likely to make an unwise man furious, and it is well to have the suffering side brought forth to receive a portion of our sympathy. In the application of these past things in history to the present time, the danger is in supposing that the evils of the working classes are the direct infliction of a higher class. The whole course of modern legislation among us is one continuous, gradual extinction of *wrongs*; the *evils* which remain are partly indigenous to the class in which they appear, and partly the mere contrast to a superior condition, in which sense of the word the great bulk of society, under any imaginable state of things, must labour under evils. Growing knowledge and virtue within the class affected are the remedies for *evils*, and these remedies may be and ought to be promoted by the more favoured of their fellow-creatures. But the tendency at present rife, and too much

sanctioned by those whose thoughts ought to be profounder and more tranquil, is to regard every *evil* as a *wrong*, and every sorrow or inconvenience of the many to be created and occasioned by the few. In this sense, even in a state of absolute and equal justice, wrongs would exist, because disparities of privilege, happiness, excellence, honour, wealth and knowledge would exist; and those who enjoyed the greater portion of all these would be said to be inflicting wrongs upon those who enjoyed only the smallest portion.